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## TO A POTTER.

BY GEO. S. PRENTICE.

In the soft twilight, gentle Alice,
I drive to view your pleasant cottage,
All greeting with the rich red wine
Pressed from the clusters on the arbor vine.
That time to sit most seems a treasure,
Spattering the flowers with summer showers,
And whatever brother shower
Takes his upon his earth of ours.

Green as my sense, as heavy after
Is the wild wine of bright dream-palace,
Drawn with each sun and wondrous grape
Of rosier cluster.

I am true to the rural pride
Without a rival in my side.
I see Poverty living better now,
Circling round my hearth in every vow,
Which, as it comes, is more than wifely strong
To aim to lay foreboding sorrow
Alee, quit-bound by my power divine!
How low before thy potter stands.

Star of my spirit, bright queen Alice,
On thine we ever in thy palace,
Let me be with thee when each thought
Of fire from heaven thy sun hath caught,
When our thy face even famous few
Like evil cloud-shadows o'er thee pass,
When beauty like a harmonized
Sweet song of thine hath stirred,
And all the Muses come to throw
Their garlands on thy brow of snow,
And bid thee—one of greatest men,
Lovers, beauty's, Pamela, and Music's Queen.
Then was my power greatest given,
And then and I are all thine own
Then my soul wakes, and then my down
Into my spirit and the silver
To win the success to my side,
And not the queen is queenly pride.

# NORWOOD;

## OR,

## VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.


Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1867, by HENRY WARD BEECHER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York.


### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CONVALESCENCE.

Heyrwood recovered a little. But he was unable to stand, and it was necessary to carry him out of the house. It was not difficult to convey him to the carriage. But he was stopped. The coachman, only made of entrance or exit was by a narrow ledge, some sixty feet above the brook, and this path was so difficult that each one was obliged to sustain himself by holding fast to the limbs of a tree which, growing out of a rift in the rocks above, reached down to branches and afforded a safe hold. At one very turning point of the rock it was necessary to slip around a jutting corner in order to get securely upon the path on the other side. This feat, to one of moderately firm head, was of no difficult or perilous. It was done and accomplished, and had been, as we have seen, so many times before, and with a lot of slavery which embraced the presence of an excursion to the glen. But a path which could be easily passed by a healthy person would be far more difficult when a party should attempt it bearing a helpless man in their arms. Various devices were suggested, but all seemed impracticable, and the counsellors were at a loss what steps to take. It was then suggested that they should send down to Cullender's for ropes, and fastening them to the chair, convey Heyrwood around the point; or draw him up the face of the rocks to the slope above, and convey him thence down to an old carriage road.

An exhumation of fear and wonder called all upon to Peter Cullender's. Some would have taken in all the difficulties at a glance, and to have known the nature of them, perfected them on the strength enough, a good eye and nerve, and strength saying a word or asking pertinent questions. Mr. Cullender, as if he were no heavier than Rose used to be when he strode all over the premises, lay hold, and laying him diagonally across his breast, so that his own long left arm passed under Heyrwood's right arm, over his back, with a firm clasp, such as only great strength and length of limbs could have effected. But Heyrwood groaned with pain, and Peter complained into hold. After a moment's pause, Pete lifted Heyrwood again, and laying him back, shook, as that his head would come at Heyrwood's neck, looked at the chair, then at the right and then other pair, leaving his left hand free for the descending notes. Then, with short steps, he descended into the brook, which made its way out of the ravine, and walked in it to the. With every pointing, gave through rocks going, then sliding over sliding now into deep pools, then a shallow sheet, wide and slippery green with moss, then with the each selected spot—now walking, now with the help of a branch leaning sideways, now bent bulked or for a moment pushing, now again, then those who took the regular stream turned from below to the point where the ascent was found practicable for sled. Pete had come out triumphantly, and was walking rapidly through the woods to Cullender's wagon, in which the owner of Cullender's Heyrwood was specially conveyed to Cullender's house.

It was with clouded face and more suffering than this that Alice experienced that Rose followed with her father in the steps of the litlowed with her father in the steps of the little-loved with her father in the steps of the little-loved with her father in full sympathy with Rose, paused then. Alice, reflected, but in a different second even more reflected, but in a different way. They appeared to have changed natures—Rose was stern in thought; Alice was demonstrative in her feeling. But neither of them spoke.

As soon as they arrived, Heyrwood was conveyed to the blue room opening out of the sitting-room. Upon an examination, it was found that two bones had been fractured and he had received a blow upon the head,—whether severe or not, could not be determined except by after-symptoms. It was judged wise not to attempt to remove him to Mr. Chandler's, and, for several weeks, he was the guest of the Cullenders.

The centre of authority in a household is permanent, but the centre of interest fluctuates almost from day to day. It is like the child around which revolves a long-silent friend, or some other child revolves; a long-silent friend, or a child returned from school, for a day or two holds all other interests in abeyance. But nothing transforms the house so instantly, and renders out with such force to change the economy, as a sick-room. It is the heart of the house, and the pulse of the mansion beats according to its expansion or contraction. The patient, I may be, on neither speak or hear, yet any member of the family, rising up or sitting down, going out or coming in, is conscious that he is affecting by the existence of the sufferer to the comfort of the sufferer. And so sickness is a silent legislator, and lays its law upon all domestic commonwealth.

If Heyrwood had sought out a place in which to be sick, he could not have selected more skillfully. The social atmosphere of the place was cheering and tonifying. The order and quietness of the household, that inexplicable something in the air which makes some houses frigid and repulsive, and others genial and attractive,—a something made up in part by the disposition and ways of the inmates, and in part by the due proportions and style of the rooms and passages, the colors and details of furniture—contributed important elements.

The blue room was well-secreted for about four feet from the floor. The resting of the blue paper was a pleasant and lovely blue. The ceiling had a faint dab of the same color.

In each corner of the room was a high-backed arm-chair of solid mahogany, in the Cullender style for many years. The chairs were old-fashioned, heavy, and of massive proportions. They were upholstered, with small sky-eyed figures of glass, with small green shutters. Before each of these could look out into the sitting-room, through the open door, and through a window to the far side, the yard and its shrubbery could be seen. The carpet was brown, and the solitary sofa, with which the curtains were removed, had its two ends covered with the same material across the floor of the blue room, where, from the opposite portion, through its own window, every morning the sunlight fell.

For a day or two Heyrwood seemed stupefied; then a slight fever arose; he was restless and wandering. He seemed estranged from all his recent scenes, and made no allusion to persons or things. Then, as Mr. Chandler came to Heyrwood's sleep, he would call his mother; and when Rachel Cullender, who was called upon for a shot, came to his side, a perplexed smile would pass over his face, and he was conscious that he had made some mistake, but was unable to discover what it was.

During this time his aunt, Mrs. Chandler, remained constantly with him, dividing her time with Rachel Cullender.

Mornings and evening, Mrs. Chandler went home for an hour or two, Alice sat in Heyrwood's room. The window opened upon the autumnal sun and autumnal air gave a peculiar charm to the day.

Nature seemed as one who has had a bath, quiet, fresh, and clothed in brilliant colors. The near trees were like jewel-boxes, in which Alice's eye reeled had been placed; the more distant ones were like the caskets in which Westwood's better knowledge, had selected with reference to the quality and color of the gem. And so in their forms and relative harmonies, the one side with scarlet maple, and the other with the golden tints of sycamore, a fine mountain ash the dark green, and on one of the evergreens, a solitary maple, which had burst out in crimson here and there, up to the very top. There was something fearful in the gay and brilliant beauty with which Nature put on her most illustrious colors. There was something awful in the way in which she took leave of the year, as if she would not be forgotten. But still there was a sadness which mingled with the solemn and grandeur of the scene, which was not to be found in the spring, when all things are budding and blossoming, and the birds are singing their sweetest songs. Alice, who had been accustomed to look upon Nature as her sacred spectacles! Alice, like Nature herself, was in the midst of her last musings and reveries. She was this morning pale and sorrowful, and her eyes were dim and dark almost as fast as the colors changed when they were most expressive and prophetic. Yet Heyrwood's very breath was audible to her ear, and a long sympathy with his sufferings, and reading for him his favorite books, had made her heart bound without her notice. Thus the woman was developed, and the child disappeared from the family beauty. Now, she listened to murmurs of delirium. Then she read passages from books which had been spread and hung in every direction, and which, in their bright, gay pictures, are like the spider's web, woven in the night, and hung in the morning dew, glistening before the first footfall? A call, a pure Malone, sat on the bed, and Heyrwood. She thought that Heyrwood, and then with them sponged her face, rubbing it with the most delicate touch; and then she began flicking her breast, bending her plant neck as if intent upon reaching under her very chin. Alice smiled. She had seen other people who thought that their nature was changed because they had licked their breasts smooth. She turned to the bed? It was only a long breath—a sigh in his sleep!

A woodpecker, with little sharp claws that could hold his snug little body in any position, head up, head down, head sideways—ran nimbly round the tree, keenly inspecting each crevice, and probing here and there with his bill. The tree was miserably healthy, and this critic flew away with a harsh, grating note of disgust.

Slowly the sun declined. The gray air thickened, like smoke. Will he ever wake to consciousness and reason?

A crooning of hens and flutter of chickens drew her attention. A hawk was flying past, far above in the sky. What!—danger close up to the house? In the gray distance, and below, as well as swamps, and cranes, and doves? If

one creeps, there are creeping enemies. If one flies, there are winged foes.

Some one called her!

"Alice!"

She started and went to Heyrwood. It was his first loud morning.

"Where am I? What had happened?"

Alice in her joy could hardly answer his questions. Her eye rested on his disjointed herself, as restraint upon her feelings when he spoke. She told if afraid that talking might

"Alice, you have been with me accident; this simply that he had been for more than a week here in his father's house; that Mr. Wentworth came every day to see him, and would soon be here; and then, if he felt disposed, she would talk with him more.

The home of Dr. Wentworth seemed to exist his ear, and, as a child, delighted him to regain his full share of memory in the past.

"Where is Mr. Wentworth?" said Heyrwood, with a look of wonder? Let us see. Did not something happen to Miss Rose? Was she hurt?"

The expression of sadness fell upon Heyrwood's face, and he half turned away from Alice. "No, no, no—I remember."

The expression of joy and exhilaration which had filled up Alice's face passed away. She turned to the door to summon her mother. Dr. Wentworth entered with the hand upon the knob.

"Ah, Alice, how is our patient? Worse? Your face notice bad thinking."

"No, Doctor, good tidings. He is in his mind again."

"Well then, my dear, you could afford a glad face. Heyrwood is dangerously ill. But I must see for myself."

Heyrwood improved every day after this, though at first slowly. His constitution had never been shaken by hardships. But it must now be reaped the benefit of a virtuous and temperate life. The fever upon his head gave many concern to Dr. Wentworth, and a depression of nerve and strength which he was unable to rouse for a not favorable sign. Still, as his symptoms generally ameliorated, he was encouraged. On his return, he was allowed to hear reading a little from his favorite books, after requiring a long place of reader. But the same reason for the use of reading—the degree of Heyrwood's weakness—the other hand, Alice's voice and manner had a soothing effect upon him. Under the influence of little this task fell almost exclusively upon her, after a few days, when Rachel Cullender never wearied. Whatever she was doing, or however weary. Every day she called from some part of the house to Heyrwood's room, and she thought likely to please him, and Heyrwood's interest in her was such that a long succession of conversations, reading for him in the sitting-room, he would be willing to set up a portion of the day, the details of the accident by which he had been injured were told to him. But he recalled nothing distinctly. The impression of the fall upon his mind had a faint impression of the glen rising, and he had fully entered. But there is when an intelligent Heyrwood was listening to him some one had been connected with his fall and some one had been severely pained by Alice. Of this subject seemed studiously to be

"Alice, were you there when I fell?"

"Yes, I was by. It was fearful beyond the confidence of my life."

"I was thinking—"

"You—you had risen higher than the falls."

"And you were climbing?"

"Yes."

"How came she to fall, then?"

"She did not."

"How did I fall, then?"

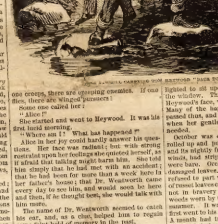
"You slipped."

"And she held fast?"

"She had nothing to do with you."

"I can save she had," said he, looking dentingly at Alice.

But as the subject seemed unwelcome to the guardian Alice, after once or twice receiving his questions, he dropped the subject. As strength returned, so Heyrwood sought to relieve his kind friend of the tasks of nursing, or at least to lighten them. He brought successful reports from his fishing luncy; and as he found Alice intent on his recollections, he was quite desirous to relieve himself by describing the scenes of his childhood, his father's plantation, negroes, and household. A listener more sympathetic one could not desire than was Alice. She





listened to him how sewing chair near the window. Thus the light was thrown upon Heyrwood's face, while her own was in shadow. Many of the happiest hours of her life were passed thus, and Alice began to look forward to when her gentle services should be no more needed.

October was ended. Its golden scroll was rolled up and put away. November had come, and its sightly frosts, its cold rains, its vigorous winds, had stripped the trees, and the forest were bare. Gerdards yet maintained a show of damaged leaves. The white oak and the birch refused to part with all their foliage, and told of those trees attending to the order of the day, but not in bravery and beauty, but as mourners who attend to their discomforts for days of summer. It was with surprise, when Heyrwood first went to his window, that he saw the change. A month had transformed the fields and woods. It had left them glowing with golden colors. Now they were sad and sombre. We are apt to fall to draw an analogy between his own hopes and his prospects now.

But the change in the physical changes during his sickness and recovery, are more striking than those which took place in society than in nature. The great political contest had closed in the election in Presidency of the United States of Abraham Lincoln—a name then little known, but soon spoken in every corner of Christendom, and added to the roll of those whose fame has no power. Of all the political struggles Heyrwood knew nothing, strifes and Judge Chilcast, little by little, detailed him the results of events, and explained to him. There were then taking place in that great and terrible tragedy of civil conflict, Heyrwood, free from those influences which were swaying so many of his friends in Virginia, entered no way into Chilcast's feelings for the integrity of the Union.

Heyrwood could not conceal from himself with a sad regret he left this hospitable farm house of Rose Cullender's return to his native. He had been there for more than two months. The earth gave him permission to remove. There was no longer any excuse for delaying the last farewells and his physical condition. The family, too, grew upon his respect and affection. He found in Rose Cullender, though simple and unlearned, a degree of intelligence which would have been remarkable in a professional man. Her sense was unusually strong, and her feeling for in a plain farmer. His wife, Rachel Cullender, showed a sound sense, and a generously an element of character like that of Rose. Peter Cullender was a man of strong and the same effects that he remembered at home. His mind was more sympathetic and quick, and his ability was broken through, disclosed a wealth of information and a fund of anecdote which made him a delightful companion.

It was not, however, till he had left the excitement which prevailed in the nation. The long period of his home gave a confidence of the intensity of southern feeling.

A few extracts from his letters, written or received, will serve to show the indications of the hour.

* * * "Father says that conservatism will not long be in the ascendant here soon. If South Carolina goes out, and a convention is called, or called to frame an ordinance of secession, he says that every southern state will follow—that is, those to follow. He is positive that Virginia, and the Great Republic of the South will be formed. He says all that he can to spread his sentiments among the gentlemen who visit us. He derides the idea of war! 'A few months' talking,' all the he this morning at the breakfast table, 'all the blood that will be shed,' and he thinks it will be. The North will never consent to coerce a state. And if the North will never consent, there will never be more than a single fight. Then, he says, humble South will be ready to lay down the sword. You know the rest. They are a sound set, fit for strategery, but not for fighting.

"He is vetoed that you do not write. It is now months since we have had a letter from you. From none than he your last letter, he expects that you are entangled with some of Yankee damsel; and sister says she knows that it is. Father is in his room and there is no one that loves the South should be at his post. Business has no business when Virginia is drawing in the to lead the new Republic, to be the centre and the South. He ought to show you these things. You up for his principles.' And you will know how but what is going on here, and

to lay your course accordingly.

"Mother is well. We groan over the received in spite of the Danish Minister. We are not to be seen in the saddle again. We are laying out for great work this winter. We had best have settled to be married.

* * * "I do not wonder that my silence affronts and distresses you. For, though I am not a very good correspondent at any time, yet I seldom allow the week to pass without a letter. For some days now know,—I did not care that you should before,—that I have been confined to my room for some six weeks, on account of injuries received by a fall. I am, however, fully able, and feel more than thirty feet, breaking two ribs and receiving a severe blow upon my head. I have had much to solve me; much to give to life a new sense of existence. If my father's country had run into war, as I fear, it will be the climax of my trouble and I shall almost wish that God be on my bend had been some degrees harder. I cannot realize that I am alive. It is a better situation to know these Northern people than we are any of our Southern friends. You may depend upon it that separation will not be peaceably allowed. It is an unfair spirit among the people that politicians duty take into account. Southern people glory in their courage is founded upon a difference in the character, principles and spirit of the North and the South, which makes it well nigh impossible for you to appreciate the reason of the people who hesitate to fight. But should they come to succeed in forcing which would succeed in patriotism and duty, you may depend upon it that they will there not only conquer but conquer a peace. Southern conservatives which will ever cause the Union or Southern people to be united. The United States question—two nations or one. United States or Southern Confederacy. I grow with the old fog, and though I hope to be spared the dread of seeing the Union dissolved, I am sure that, if it should come, I should be dreaded than to fill my but against that. Say of our father which guidance in its fold. Be clearer measures and the most learned and wisest statesmen of America.

During the winter Heyrwood sought to recover himself from the turbulence of public affairs which surrounded him. Nothing, though rapidly improving, was yet delicate, and he wandered into wonderful fields to be reaped. He finally hoped that by some fortunate arrangement of the elements, that the two people might harmonize their differences, and some final day of peace which for thirty years noble men had hoped for and sought in vain.

But he had not sought for. The differences were radical, that should they be really brought to a settlement, they would destroy the one, and that they were being brought into conflict, by a power of events, and not by the will of the people and power as to give all the signs that it was brought by a Divine decree. It was evident that a stream begins to rise over the banks, eagerly the people of the South, and that against the rising flood, and to control its ravages, which disposition of the people. Heyrwood then lived in dining to wait and watch what the waters will do, or the wise who have prepared themselves dealing with unmanifestable events, that were working out their own course, would not suffer men to restrain them.

During the middle of winter, Heyrwood the boisterous weather of March in Massachusetts, and left for New York, on his way to Charleston in South Carolina.

### CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE OLD MAN'S JOURNEY.

Since winter did not yield to entreaty, and snows were deep, and the winds were searching, Tommy Dodge's old-fashioned sleigh was brought to get about. He had visits had been made to Mr. Wentworth's, hoping to see Alice, but the weather was always too cold. Besides one old man found it hard to bear. He was not used to it. Only a few days before he would scarcely be beholden to say one even for information. He was no longer to be trusted to judge the means of support. Charity he respected. Had it not been for it, many families would have suffered. But through his wife, unknown to her husband and the Calcutta's he would have suffered. But through his wife, unknown to him, the support of the poor was taken out of under the color of his wife's earnings.

His last visit was to the house of Wentworth's. It was a fine winter day, in January. It was one of those days in which nature is both brilliant and beautiful. The sparkle of the air, the scope of the sunlight, the transparency of the atmosphere, seem to be unknown in nature. But out of that very nourishing air every sharp wind, and whose temper is unmanageable by the most skillful hands, and the radiance of the day is mockery. Did you never think of it? Then you have looked out of a parlor-window into this have looked out of a parlor-window into this sir; or, bundled up from the bitterness of sleigh, protected through the nose in such cigar or tooth, from cold; or you have such cigar or tooth, and that your warm blood, poets. But were you beats of the assembling? Did you feel a dry coolness, and even a sharp cutting chill, yet feel by fed, and with sleekly down her fleece upon her motherly winter robe down her fleece upon her motherly winter robe down her fleece, and tacks Insentient family of sleeping children, and tacks the flower-pots, and broods upon all the

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herded, wallying, hybernating creatures; and then, careless of the rest, she stags harsh songs in his words, and roars all night through the air, as if man in hovels, in cock-rooms, in poor-houses,—the sick, the feeble, the old,—were none of her concerns. And then, after one of those wild winter scenes, when the sower has blinded the air, and whirled and sifted through every crevice, and heaped itself against your sash and hedge, and settled down in sheltered places in mountain-gulfs, have the charming creature sit in with open face and charming expression, as if there had been no quarrel all night, for the sassy wind, nor a pitiless storm, but all was good and beautiful, and not a human life, man and brute where so fain, if anybody was guilty, or cold, or suffering!

It was on just such a morning that Tommy Taft grunted and stopped, now and then, for breath, as he made his way to Dr. Wentworth's. He did not think all these fine things. And yet, that was about the meaning of his grants, if he had but the fancy to unroll and interpret them to the best advantage. Agnes Hessel saw him coming up the path. She went to the garden door, in real kindness, opened it to the old man, saying:

"Really, Mr. Taft, I pity anybody who has to travel on such a morning."

"Thankee, marm, for nothing. Keep your pity for them that need it—I don't."

"There's no use in being touchy. You are sick, Taft, and you know it. I think it would be better to let the doctor know, and see if he can't help you."

"No help on't. That's good. What's the use? give me no more words out. But I want a good for the horses pretty much next week, and I'm going to Wentworth to get it. I've no anything for my wounds. Ay? Is I? I'm getting on—getting on—I'm getting on."

There was something ghastly in pious Agnes in such talking by a man seemingly not far from the grave; and there was a pity in her that was to forbear such a reply as she would once have given, for she could but help saying:

"Taft, you don't get help in over with you, Heavens! Ay, my friend, you must look to God not for from the grave."

"Just as good as to live, Agnie. I've been on the road to it seventy years, and I know I must be in the grave near by this time. I've been to the tavern where a good many put up, Agnie, and I know many that are busy completing their last journey."

This was said in a peculiar tone that might be humor, or sad earnest, and Agnie could not tell which. She looked earnestly at Tommy, and said:

"Taft, have you made your preparations? Have you done anything to get ready?"

"Yes, I guess' ready as long as I can remember; and as to preparation, you know that Parkinson and I are neighbors, and he helps me to do the right thing by me. Don't be timid, Agnie. I shall be a brickmaker myself in Tartorous makes good titles. I guess mine is right."

"Taft, I don't know what to make of you."

"You don't need to make anything. I am made up already, and have been so long as I can remember, though if I was to be born over again, Agnie, I don't know anybody that would like to better than you, it's said. Though—"

Agnie one of those wives that acted upon him like a spark of fire upon gunpowder.

She rose with the dignity of anger, and was against the trouble of spending the day with a man who came to just as Agnie was ready and anxious for company.

Some well-worker of man with an affectionate speak, and seemed more like a child's love for a grandparent than the greeting of a neighbor and friend.

Tommy stood in the mud, but Agnie did not invite him comfortably and pressed him back into the street.

"No, no; there is no use, Uncle, to-morrow. You go to sit along. How you are sitting in Mr. Father tells me that the winter goes hard with you. I know you will be glad to know that we have heard from Barton Caldwell. He wrote to father and me yesterday. He is very well, and talks of living in the West."

"Living in the West?" said Tommy, with unaffected surprise, as if his feelings had been hurt; "living in the West? and I going to be out again? He and not see the boy again? I can't have it; I can't. Why, Rose, I can't. You must write and tell him so. There aint but one Barton Caldwell in the world, and other folks don't know his value, I do. I'd rather die to-morrow, if I could see him to-night, than live a year and not see him. I tell you, Miss Rose," said Tommy with a solemnity which he could never seem him manifest before, "I can't die till I see Barton. I want to ask him something I want to know—" and with that he hesitated, looked at Rose almost imploringly, as if he want to know something about it. If Barton says yes, it's right, and I'll believe it."

Rose could make nothing out of these sentences; but Agnie, seeing by the look of the plain, she said:

"Barton writes that he will be home in February, and I've no doubt he will make it all right."

"Comin' to February? Let's see, that 's three or three weeks. Maybe that 'll be so. Ay?"

"Can I help you, Uncle Tommy? Am I not as good as Barton?"

Tommy had risen, and, looking at Rose with great kindness, said:

"Bless you, dear child, you're good enough to be Barton's own self; and I would—I would—I know. I'm about out of sorts, Miss Rose, and I'm sorry I've come to trouble anybody to-day. Service pain is the trouble. Service pain."

Rose was quite peculiarly unwilling to have any one present, when his wife was absent, to himself up in his left and grovel and groan by himself. Nervous attacks were becoming more frequent, and the whole system was becoming more shattered. Dr. Wentworth, the family physician, Dr. Wentworth replied:

"The disease is obscure. I suppose it to be a concussion affection of the stomach. That it will prove fatal I do not doubt; but whether it will drop off suddenly, or be gradually worn out with suffering, I can not tell."

The old man bravely resisted all sympathy. He would not go to see the doctor, he had nothing to say about his own sufferings, and was angry at any attention to them. Agnie and Taft, herself feeble, hovered around the old man with a kind, helpless pity, which only irritated him, and could not hide. The most unlovely side of his character Tommy Taft showed in his last days. This habit was contagious, for several others in the village were known to have the same disagreeable trait. Fortunately, it was confined to the one vice.

As the old man rose to depart, Rose felt a presentiment that she should never see him again. She was just about leaving home to make a visit to her relatives in Boston, which she may have been made during the holidays, but was prevented by her mother's transient illness. As he moved slowly toward the door, she recalled the days of her childhood, how many times he had frolicked with her, how many little games he had taught her, what funny stories he had intended to amuse her visits at his rude quarters, and her heart was deeply touched with the old man's sufferings, which, every time she saw him, seemed to be pitiable ground. When Tommy turned at the front door, as Rose reached out her hand to say goodbye, a tear rolled down her cheek and fell upon the old man's hand.

"Good-bye, dear Uncle Tommy: I shall never meet you again, until we meet in Heaven."

At first the old man seemed enraged at her feeling, and said somewhat harshly:

"Don't be a fool, child. I'm about dead yet! That's funeral business." But, changing his tone, Tommy would have touched the sympathy Rose with Rose. Looking intently at her out from under his great, shaggy eyebrows, he said: "It's just as like as not that what you say is true, Rose, and I'm about dead enough, for all that I wanted him. I won't trust none of these folks to know me. No, no! God will give me a lame old man to be stumblin' in alone; and I never had one word here spoken to me by a friend. That kind of journey's one a fellow can't go back on. It was wrong, wrong, wrong, all I have to be; and if Barton was only here to know me the way—and—"

Rose was deeply affected. She had never in all her life heard Taft speak of religion except in broad humor, and never at all in its relations to his own future condition. It was but the languid excitement of one weakened by long sickness, and her sympathies flowed out. The old man would have been as sturdy and dotted as ever had one word been spoken against him.

Rose knew, in spite of all his faults, the real goodness of the old man. She knew that he was the ragged stranger of his mood, and she opened the door for him to go out. She was but living instinct as to the right thing to do, and only recognized the sympathy which existed between them after the old man had passed out. Then, as she looked after him, and saw how he tottered, how his head shook, how his whole frame was shattered, and how he was left to struggle on alone, she felt that she had been cold and unfeeling in her treatment of him.

"Taft, I'm sorry for you. Let me help you. Let me do something for you. Let me—"

"Let me alone, Miss Rose," said Tommy, in a tone of irritation, as he turned away from her.

Rose was deeply mortified. She had never in all her life been so repulsed. She was conscious of having done her best, and never at all in its relations to his own future condition. It was but the languid excitement of one weakened by long sickness, and her sympathies flowed out. The old man would have been as sturdy and dotted as ever had one word been spoken against him.

Rose knew, in spite of all his faults, the real goodness of the old man. She knew that he was the ragged stranger of his mood, and she opened the door for him to go out. She was but living instinct as to the right thing to do, and only recognized the sympathy which existed between them after the old man had passed out. Then, as she looked after him, and saw how he tottered, how his head shook, how his whole frame was shattered, and how he was left to struggle on alone, she felt that she had been cold and unfeeling in her treatment of him.

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"Let me alone, Miss Rose," said Tommy, in a tone of irritation, as he turned away from her.

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THE NEW YORK LEDGER

## THE CONFESSION.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

He forehead were a frown when first I met her;
Sweet and white, among the flowers she stood,
Gazing with all her might the fatal letter.
That in a moment had so changed her mood,
Proved that might should wrestle or dismay her
My heart would turn back home sad to the sea.
Where I might soothe my darling and caress her,
And she perchance be glad to welcome me.

She knew me not, indeed; though many a token
Of tenderness I spoken to her ear
Yet yesterday kept the seal of love unbroken,
As though no secret lay between us two.
I could not dare to give my soul expression
Until I saw her very—dear to me;
I would not choose to grant a free confession
Unless she showed some sign of answering.

Oh, when she smiles it is the hour of danger,
For Cupid shows his weapons in her eyes;
To those sweet lips I own I'm not a stranger,
And the provoking—but I won't tell of dimples
On darling; I have no right to know or feel you;
Your heart is under lock and key for me while
In fair of grace will I reveal what you
With no one else needs to when you smile.

So days went by—I grew more impressive
Each time I might waited between the two,
And would no that look say I was spoken
If love had not conceded the half he knew.
But when I saw her arms were open in season,
Wearing jewels her mother's grace, alone,
In tears I fled, and every sensation from sea
Then claimed her love, and forever all my own.

## THE GENTLEMEN'S PIC-NIC.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"Let's have a pic-nic, all by ourselves," said Mr. Frank Harcourt, one bright, clear night of the month with great solemnity.

"Wouldn't be much fun, I should say without any girls along—something like the play of Hamlet, with the part of Hamlet left out," quoted John Stevens, who "never heard of a pic-nic without a lot of girls."

"I don't propose to have a pic-nic without any girls, even," said Mr. Harcourt severely.

"Then I'll thank you to state distinctly what you do mean to do."

"Well, then. Boys all of you! The girls here are getting—well, a bore."

"Girls always do," interposed Walter Barrington.

"And seem to have an idea," solemnly went on Frank, "that they can't live or have without their help and assistance—a natural delusion, perhaps, but still a delusion."

"Of course it's all nonsense," remarked Mr. Marvin.

"They must be put down," enunciated Cornelius Hathaway.

"And we're the fellows to do it," said Raymond.

"But, look here," said Ellersay, "it must be distinctly understood that no girls are going to be invited."

"Cornelius, 'Speech is silver, silence is golden.'—If you should suggest one thing more, I'll toss you for consecutive minutes—"

"I'm dumb, and I'm not going to be one."

"If there are occasions on earth on which women should be left out, upon honor, they are at a wedding and a pic-nic," proceeded Mr. Ellersay.

"I'm not going to have it. I don't see any way to help ourselves—that is, as long as men will make fools of themselves; but, in the pic-nic business, there's no reason why we shouldn't assert ourselves."

"Be calm, my dear," suggested Jim Richard Ferrington, "and the crisis will be passed."

"We can buy cake, and every fellow can bring a contribution in his individual basket. Such a pic-nic as will have! and invite all the girls! and, I tell you what, we'll shall be a monumental pic-nic! Anybody can get up a brand-day affair, but nobody but us can get up a pic-nic, you know."

"Where?" rather doubtfully questioned Ferrington.

"Oh, I know a jolly place up the river, and we'll have some violins and a dance, and teach the girls what it is to do it, and you, sonorous, is the very connotation of the whole affair—let no woman within ten miles of the place be allowed to set on down, by the river at eight, Monday night."

"Agreed!" cried the admiring chorus, "so be it."

"Will you hold your tongues?" reproachfully demanded the author. "There's nothing like method in these things. Raymond, you shall hold yourself ready to act as commissioner of ways and means, and see that the baskets are—"

"I can do it," gravely smiled Walter, "my sister is out of town, and I can send the girl out on the cars, and she can bring the baskets on the cellar. Tain, with lots of mustard—that's the talk."

"Marvin, you may supply the pickles."

"No use."

"So bum. If you can neither beg, borrow, nor steal, that I will be sure Raymond, Cornelius—Marvin, pickles; Dolley, plates, cups, and plenty of them; Ferrington—napkins and fancy things; Smith, oranges, and plenty—apples, and apples—"

"Who ever heard of peanuts at a pic-nic?" inquired the fastidious Ellersay.

"Didn't I tell you I want to be original? I'm afraid one-quarter of the two persons in the I don't much care. Larkins, you may bring ice, sugar, and lemons, and I'll make lemonade—and champagne!"

The countenances of the six brightened inconsiderably.

"I must say that's doing it very handsomely," cried Marvin, who was still musing darkly on the subject of pickles.

"Remember!" impressively pronounced the master-mind, "not a girl is to be there, on peril, horror, and sorrowy the watchword!"

And so the meeting broke loud separated, to make preparation for the affair that was to "put down" the girls of Sunbrook all effectually.

Walter Raymond nearly cut off the forefinger and thumb of his left hand, sliding broad for sandwiches, and Jim Richard Ferrington fainted during days afterwards; while Bridget marvelled much as to what had become of her Friday's baking of bread. Cornay Dalley, as he was legitimately called, was not knowing what else to do with it, for he had nearly a bushel in the drawer, where his mother kept her only black silk apron. All were in an advanced stage of preparation, except poor Jack Marvin.

"Look here," he cried, grasping his principal by the third button of his coat, at seven o'clock on Saturday night, "there's not a pickle to be had in this town for love or money, and the 'mustard for a fellow to do?"

Frank Ellersay looked calmly down upon his distressed friend from the height of a serene philosophy.

"Say what, make 'em, of course?"

"Make pickles?"

"Will use pickles but a lot of cucumbers, with vinegar thrown over 'em?"

"Pank, you're a genius!" exclaimed Marvin.

Late that night, Mrs. Marvin descried a figure groping among her cucumber vines.

"Jack, is that you? What on earth are you doing?"

"S—making a bouquet," stuttered our hero, retreating rapidly with both arms full of the largest and ripest cucumbers he could collect in the pall of vinegar he had ridden behind the barn.

"I declare," said Jack to himself, as he finished the cucumbers and was left with his arms full, "I hadn't any idea housekeeping was so easy!"

The eventful evening arrived—a delicious moon rising over the hills, and a breeze, such as the gales of Bendemeer, rippling the mirror-like surface of the river. The ladies of Sandbrook, in a delightful flutter of curiosity, expectation and excitement, were promenading in the woodland dell, where a level sweep of grassy green, enclosed by magnificent forest trees, formed a ball-room called in by stars and full of fragrant odors. Just beyond, a little streamlet ran babbling down the slope, emptying its crystal tides into the river which at this cascade, beneath which Mr. Ellersay had dispersed his champagne to cool.

"There's a wine-cellar for you," said Frank. While the other gentlemen busily moved away beneath the spreading branches of a magnificent chestnut tree, and, in pairs, disappeared.

Mr. Wells blew up when we can do," chortled Mr. Raymond, and with the six Sellenmount and Commissaries scrambled up the bank and joined the promenade.

"What are we going to do, Mr. Ellersay?" whispered the ladies.

"Do? We're going to have a pic-nic, to be sure."

"Why, where are the baskets, and—and where is the irrepressible Ferrington, whereupon his companions laughed aloud, and the ladies with Order might have turned upon the luckless Ferrington.

In another five minutes a ruddy blaze sent its light through the forest trees, busily moved away beneath the spreading branches of a magnificent chestnut tree, and, in pairs, disappeared.

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"I think it will be a success," said Raymond, after his hearty laugh was over.

"Think!—I'm sure of it," said Marvin, lordly, "I'm sure of it—positively sure of it."

"Hush—sh—sh!" whispered Ellersay, in awful hush—sh—sh! "here comes the refreshments!" quoted John Stevens.

"I'm very hungry, Mr. Ellersay," said Kitty Slaughaby, a dab-haired little sylph with blue eyes and a pink sash, "and the sandwiches are delicious."

"Isn't it almost time for refreshments?" asked Miss Clara Rodney, a brunette, with eyes of brilliant and a voice of silver.

"All in good time, fair ladies," said Ellersay, "and I assure you that the supper is such that you don't give us credit for ingenuity enough to get up a pic-nic, you are very much mistaken. I'll have to say, Jack, get up a lunch, and look sharp."

No sooner were the ladies fairly shouted in this new arrangement than Frank Ellersay, with a towel over his snowy vest, rolled up his sleeves and began to uncork.

"Boys, lend a hand!" he cried, authoritatively. "Let the ladies wait on themselves. The Committee must be on hand to help make up a merry party, and, I must say, a very fine supper we've done. Bring on your sandwiches, Raymond—get the champagne, Marvin."

"But we haven't any tumblers!" interposed Lavinia Rodney, in piteous plaint.

"Who—dunce—we—haven't," cried Ellersay, "men of resources, and they didn't somebody think of 'em?"

A brilliant idea seized—everybody looked at everybody else, reproachfully.

"We were thinking of anything" said Smith.

"So—of course we can't," said Ellersay, "ladies, you must excuse us. We couldn't be a pic-nic if people remembered everything."

"Here are some cups, Ferrington; we can at least drink out of the bottles, I suppose, and Raymond, you can wait and we'll have a range 'em at once."

But Raymond Ferrington returned with a painted face.

"Where did you put the wine? I can't find it—"

"Under the cascade, you goose."

"Well, it isn't there."

"Isn't there!" cried myself. Too ought to have brought your spectacles, Dick."

But the fact was that Raymond's head appeared above the bank.

"I've looked all over, and find the basket of sand-wiches!"

"And the handbox of cake and macaroni is gone!" croaked Cornay Dalley.

Ellersay frowned, looked and dashed impatiently down the bank.

"Some rascal must know how to use their eyes," he muttered.

"Some rascal," echoed, talking to itself as merrily as ever, and a group of black-green gentlemen, with a bag of sandwiches in each hand, and a bottle of champagne in each pocket, and a bottle of champagne in each pocket, and a bottle of champagne in each pocket

# THE NEW YORK LEDGER

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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## RECOLLECTIONS OF A BUSY LIFE.

By HORACE GREELEY.

No. VI.

ABIDE TO NEW-HAMPSHIRE.

Our journey of the "Board farm," in Bedford, answered very nearly to my seventh and eighth years. That was a large and naturally good farm, but in a state of dilapidation, overgrown with bushes and briars, its fences in number and the buildings barely able to stand alone—the large two-story house more especially far gone. My father and let his own farm, on shares, to a younger neighbor, who he wished and hoped thus to serve, while he was led to expect a reward for whatever improvement he should make on that which he had taken instead. He was disappointed in every way in both fallen, and he was for nearly a year unable to work; his brother did not prosper on our place; while the promises which had been us to the larger sphere of effort were not made to us. So we children—by this time, four in number—the larger house and broader notice of the Board farm, were a welcome exchange; but our fortunes, manifestly, waned there, and I think we were all keenly glad to return to our own paternal acres and modest farm, in the spring of 1820. As we were trying to work out a modest, I believe sufficient, for hope I but sickness, rash endorsements, a family failing, and bad luck generally, had swelled his indebtedness to something like $1,000—a sum all owed in the world would, at the current prices, pay. In fact, I do not know how much property would have paid $1,000 in Boscawen-shire in 1820, when almost every one was hopelessly involved, every third farm was in the sheriff's hands, and every poor man leaving for "the West" who could raise the money requisite for getting away. Every thing was cheap—dog-cheap—British goods especially; my own was comparatively rich were ruined, and the poor were often compulsorily the mid on the brink of famine. I have not been much of a Free-Trader ever since.

We had abolished our grammar village and our buying, when a very heavy rain fell, and for a week or more in 1819, when almost every week was a Saturday; and all the rain poured on the roof of the house. Father was absent on business, but on which he gathered the little ones around him, and delighted us with stories and prospects of small things she purposed to do for us by the latter days she hoped to see. Father did not return till after we should have fled asleep, and, when he did, it was with things that our mother knew must be unwelcome to him. But she was scarcely surprised, though we young ones could not guess it, when, about sunrise on Monday morning, the sheriff and sundry other officials, with two or three of our principal creditors, appeared, and—first formally demanding and receiving—proceeded to levy on farm, stock, implements, household stuff, and in all our worldly possessions but the clothes we stood in. These had been set with beautiful flax—of course, no silk, of any moment—but it was a word and a blow in those days, and the blow fell, in the form of a writ of collecting by legal process. Father left the premises instantly, apprehending arrest and imprisonment, and was invisible all day; the rest of us united in a friendly neighborly way, and the work of saving went on in our absence. It were needless to say that all we had was saved, and our debts not much lessened, for farm, which had cost us all we owned, and had been considerably improved in our hands, was appraised and sold to creditors at less than out of which the legal costs were first deducted, the hands of "pro, giving by one of the appraisers, whereof we owned an undivided half, was attached by a creditor, thrashed out by his own work, and sold; the net result being an emptying of our half-filled bins and barrels into those of the costs. Thus, when night fell, we were as bankrupt a family as ever lived.

We returned to our devastated house, and the work of so amid there while father was away, and on that westward, in quest of a new home. He stopped in the township of Hampton, in Washington county, N. Y., and worked himself over a new house, with the help of a friend, who settled a hundy farm and kept watch on the premises till we could get there. Meanwhile, he returned to the old farm, and, on the 1st of January, 1821, we all started in a sleigh two-horse sleigh, with the little we could save, was left us, for the township of Westhaven, Vermont, where father had hired, for $10 per annum, a small house, in which, after an interminably cold journey, we were installed before Christmas.

Let me revert for a little to our New Hampshire life, ere I tell it a final adieu.

I have already said that Amherst and Bedford are in the main poor towns, whose hard, rocky soil yields grudgingly, rare of wood. Enough in the villages, if even there, there were very few who could be called freehanded in my early boyhood. Poor as we were, no richer family lived within sight of our humble homestead, though our western prospect was only bounded by the "Uncanoonuc Hills," two or three miles away. On the east, our range of vision was barred by the hill on the side of which we lived. The leading man of our neighborhood was Captain Nathan Barnes, a Revolutionary soldier and Calvinist deacon, after whom my brother was named, and who was a farmer of decided probity and sound judgment—not perhaps, $2,000. Though an ardent Federalist, as were a majority of his townsmen, he commanded a company of "minutemen" raised to defend the country in case of British invasion during the war of 1812.

Deacon Barnes' farm was not very thickly grass by-gone when I was born, and in patches, its proportion, and its bulk, were still more throughout that intensely Whig region. When neighbors and neighbors' wives drew together to spend the day or the eve of their mutual visit, there were often interspersed with "Clear grit!" "Hunkers!" "Silver-grays!" and the like then in vogue, such reminiscences of the great political contest "American Taxation," among of some fifty pounds' verse, opening thus:

"Once I owned an estate,
Where I lived very late;
Of Britain's taking glory
Concerning the taxation
Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes."

The last throes of expiring loyalty are visible in the quaint phraseology of the verse; and even Free, being spoken of as "dear" and "good," is a reminiscence of the royal word, George III., who was, and still is, dear and good to his people, unprofessional instruments.

The ballads of the hate war with Great Britain were too so popular in our immediate neighborhood to be forgotten readily. I remember a few of them still, and sung them with spirit and effect, along with "Yankee Doodle," "The Star-Spangled Banner," by Wolfe, and even "Wearing of the Green," which, though hailing from Dixieland, has been revived and adopted in our day with as much zeal as ever in Irish precincts.

We were, in the intest sense, democrats, we called ourselves Republicans, and Democrats where Jefferson received but two votes in the presidential struggle of 1820, the latter being cast at the "Board farm," our house school to which we went in the "long" winter, when our abilities were humble, and whose library accommodations were little more than nil. I was almost always with the family, even when we were not together, for we neighbors—"company"—and my two sisters were but fifty cents a week, she had to be her guests at ten, precisely as if she had been a daughter of the house. I think I have seen manners ever simpler, or society freer from pretension, or more cordially kind, than in farmers' house.

Sunday was less bounteous and kindly in less prized than in the days of the Scotch-Irish settlers, who would collect to the number of relatives and social enjoyment, especially in the warm hundreds nearest the end of the Dorchester line from the younger swarms scattered over the back-lots of Bedford, Merrimack, Stretch away even to the far "Holland Purchase," in the extreme Western section of New York, as well as Oregon or Wisconsin now is. I remember that, in the year 1818, some of these, with their girth their ten in fifties—then a far bolder and more ambitious migration to Ohio would not have often seen my grandfather Woodman's house crowded with his children and grandchildren, nephews from Vermont and other neighbors, and all the children of the latter, while it lasted, were nearly welcome. The house was large enough for all, and had room for a bed-chamber, was always kept open and free to all comers, to any solitary of their partners by coming and their children, is not to be persistently slimmed. In that, we lived better than we could afford to, for, as I have said, we were poor—by, and this was the case of our downfall. Our neighbors were not rich, and their feasting when friends and relatives, especially those of higher standing, visited them, was not their company, and was rarely found unable to fulfill their most sanguine expectations. When too many dropped in upon us at once, or we were found unable to entertain they might fairly expect, be had a habit of telling them so themselves:

"When I was a boy of fifteen," said he, "I lived next (or nearest) to the great man of Medford, Mass. My employer, Mr. Marshall, was a firm and worthy man, but a Tory, and those with deemed it incumbent on her to give our neighbors to-morrow, as a proof of esteem for our acquaintance. In these anxious days, Deacon Barnes was a Tory, and those with deemed it for "company" occasions: ordinarily, our fare was very simple, and we children thought it so. Mrs. Marshall, on the great occasion, had her ox-tailed—shortened to her—of which there is all good pereyne; still, it was not imperative on a family to have a great dinner on Sunday; and all would have passed off without remark, but for the fact that Mrs. Marshall, in conclusion, "if you had any thing different to offer, I am sorry that it is not agreeable to Mr. Marshall," is saying—then.

### THE "COMPANY" SWINDLE.

"The great swindle of the present day," said Sagacious Dan Bangup. Had Shakespeare lived in these times he would have said, "The great swindle of the present day." Why, the most unfortunate gentleman's meanest spy attempts to get into the "company" market. But the mystery of iniquity called "company" is confined to the creditors at law, known in the reign of the Spinner Queen, and subsequently as "the Ring," is a gigantic "company" of rich "gold operator," Sandwich, Bangup, Bonanza, Bonanza, Bonanza

### GOOD-BYE TO THE SWALLOWS.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

What are the house-martins talking about,
All through this long August morning;
What does the open-mouthed orator say—
Is he preaching, or coaxing, or warning?

Ah, now I remember, the cause of it all,
It is time for the birds to be flying;
Some are not ready, others won't wait,
And this is the cause of such crying.

Mr. Fleetwing declares there is plenty of time,
That the fogies all needlessly worry,
Forgetting that he can fly faster than they,
And so never feels in a hurry.

But old Mother Martin (from dining on flies)
Has grown most alarmingly fatter;
No wonder that she is in haste to be off,
Or keeps up a garrulous chatter.

Miss Bright-Eyes is begging her mother to stay,
In spite of that wise woman's preaching;
"For, ma, only think, at twilight each night,
Mr. Fleetwing 'the German' is teaching."

Mother Martin looks grave, calls the Dominie in,
Confiding to him her distraction;
He talks a great deal, but all his remarks
Seem to give her but small satisfaction.

He would like to be off, his sermons are through,
But would do for a new congregation;
His coat rather rusty is growing the while,
Scarcely fitting a bird in his station.

Lawyer Coke is delighted as sundry disputes
Toward close litigation are tending,
And Swallowdom's safe reconstruction shall give
Good causes for contests unending.

Lady Fine-Feather grieves to abandon her home,
For fear her young swallows will wander;
Too faithless to trust in the care of the Lord,
Who can keep them in safety tho' yonder.

Thus through the bright air of the morning I hear
And translate what these busy ones utter;
And watch them arranging their order of march,
With chatter, and skirmish, and flutter.

* * * * * *

They have gone. In the blue of the far-away sky,
They have wavered and faded. Good-morrow.
Good-by, little swallows, good-by for a year,
A year, with its possible sorrow.

You will come with your cheery and musical note;
Shall I see you? Perchance to all seeming
The same outer "I" shall be still in the spot,
In the same busy idleness dreaming.

But a soul older grown some roses must lose,
Some wheat from the summer-time treasure;
And souls like our faces grow lined as we live,
Time treading, on both leaves his measure.

Good-by, little swallows, God knows if we meet,
Or what chances shall keep us asunder;
But if in the window you see me no more,
Little birds, will you miss me, I wonder?

## WINNING HER WAY.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER," "SELF-MADE," "THE HIDDEN HAND," ETC., ETC.

### CHAPTER LXXX.

LITTLE LENNY'S ADVENTURES.

Oh! 'tis a peerless boy,
Fearless, ingenuous, courteous, capable;
He's all the mother's, from the top to toe.
SHAKESPEARE.

Was little Lenny frightened when he woke up and found himself in that strange and wretched garret, closely surrounded by new and terrible faces?

Not at all. Neither by nature nor by training was the baby-boy a coward. The child of many generations of heroes had inherited no craven fears; the cherished darling of the household had been taught none.

In a word, he was a plucky little fellow, afraid of neither man, beast nor devil.

And there was still another reason why on this occasion he was not afraid. For if, as it has been written by the prince of poets, "*music hath charms to soothe the savage breast*," how much more hath beautiful and gracious childhood?

The wretched men and women, gathered around this pretty boy, looked on him, not with ferocious faces, but with smiles; and not with the deceitful smiles whose insincerity a child will detect much more quickly than an adult can, but real, heartfelt smiles, called up by seeing among them "something better than they had known."

Yes, even while they were wresting from him his little treasures of finery and jewelry, they did it with an expression of eagerness rather than of ferocity.

And little Lenny gazed on them, turning his blue eyes from one to another, not in fear, but in wonder and in curiosity. Sometimes he was so much amused by their excitement that he laughed aloud.

But he was as a little prince, king, or god among these poor creatures, and he knew it. For when Red Roger unclasped and snatched his elegant pearl and turquoise necklace from his neck, he suddenly put out his chubby hand and snatched it back—so suddenly and unexpectedly that he actually gained possession of it again before the slow and lumbering brute could prevent him. And after he did so he fixed his eyes indignantly upon the thief, and said:

"Man! how dare you tate 'hings 'out leave?"

And it was delicious to see the air of authority and confidence with which the baby-boy put this question.

And why not? Had he not been permitted to rule over his mother and cousins, and even over his godfather, the veteran general, who was the greatest man *he* knew in the world? and should he not rule over these poor creatures? And besides, I think that Master Leonard Lyon, while inheriting all the graces and virtues of his ancient house, inherited some of its faults as well, and among the latter that inordinate pride of caste which is so very objectionable in this Republican age, and that he looked upon this order of human creatures as rather lower in the scale of being than well-bred cattle. So, captive and helpless as he was, he looked around upon them with queerly mixed feelings of wonder, mirth, pity and disapprobation, but without a particle of fear.

As for the red-haired ruffian, he was so astonished by the words and actions of the baby-boy, that he could but open his mouth and eyes and stare. He did not attempt to recover the necklace; but of course he knew that the child and his jewels were both in his power all the same.

Lenny, after staring at him for a moment and receiving no answer to his unanswerable question, turned to the gipsy-looking girl and asked:

"What you name, dirl?"

"Meg," answered the girl, smiling kindly on the child.

"Met, you tate dis and teep it for Lenny. *Me* name Lenny," he said, handing her the necklace.

Meg looked up in doubt and fear to the face of her red-haired relative, and meeting his eye, and seeing him nod and wink at her, she slipped the necklace into her bosom and answered the child, calling herself by the name he had given her:

"Yes, pretty! Met will keep it for Lenny. (Yes, and I will, too, if I can,") she added, in a lower tone. But she probably knew also that the jewels must pass back into the custody of the red-haired ruffian before the night should be over.

But Lenny's attention was instantly called away to another quarter. In fact, he needed to be constantly on the alert to prevent himself from being stripped and skinned by the thieves.

"You 'top, *man!*" he indignantly exclaimed to Black Bill, who was stealing the pearl and turquoise armlets from his sleeve. "Div Lenny back, minute!" he cried, making a snatch at the jewels.

Black Bill probably felt safe in relinquishing his prizes, for the time being; for as soon as he restored them to Lenny, the child passed them over to the appointed keeper of the jewels, saying:

"Met, teep dem tob for Lenny."

And the girl, with a smile, put them also in her bosom.

But presently this chosen servant seemed turning traitor to her little lord, for while his attention was for a moment called off elsewhere, he felt hands at work upon his pretty little blue kid gaiters, with their gold buttons.

"'Top dat, *Met!* 'Top it, *Met!* What you pull off my hoos for? Me not do bed. 'Top it, *Met!*" he cried, this time less in anger than in anguish to see such treachery in a trusted servant.

"Oh! I want 'em so bad! so bad! Won't you give 'em to me? Won't Lenny give 'em to Met?" pleaded the girl, in a wheedling tone.

"You want my hoos?" inquired Lenny, pitifully.

"Yes, so bad! I have got no shoes."

"You dot no hoos?"

"No."

"Well, den, me div you mine. Tate off! tate off! Me dot more hoos home."

The girl took them off. And this must be said in excuse for her, that she was acting under the orders and under the eyes of her tyrannical and unscrupulous uncles.

"Now put on *you* feet! Put on! put on!" insisted Lenny, stooping over and looking at Meg's sturdy naked limbs. "But my hoos too 'ittle for you feet. You feet so bid!" he added, in astonishment, at the size of Meg's "understanding."

DRUSILLA'S DREAM.

"Never mind, I can change 'em for a bigger pair," answered the girl.

Before Lenny could reply again, he was accosted by the beldam, who held him on her lap and who had got possession of his elegant little white satin hat, with its plume of white marabout feathers fastened with a cluster of diamonds.

"And may I have this, my pretty, pretty bird?" she asked, holding it up to view.

"You dot no bonnet?" he inquired, compassionately.

"No, my pretty little angel, I've got no bonnet."

"Den you have Lenny hat—Doosa div Lenny more hat. Put on, put on!" he exclaimed, impatiently seizing his beautiful and costly cap, and trying to decorate with it the horrible head of the old hag.

He was permitted to complete his purpose, to the unbounded mirth of the group, who all burst into loud laughter at the ludicrous effect produced.

When this ebullition had somewhat subsided, Lenny bestowed his sash upon Meg, his tiny pocket-handkerchief on one man, and his little gloves on another; and then he said, with an air of relief:

"Now, dat all—Lenny dot no more div! Now Lenny want do home see Doosa."

He said this with so much confidence, yet with so much uneasiness and longing that they all pitied him. The old woman asked:

"Who is Doosa, my little angel?"

"Doosa id Doosa—Lenny Doosa—Lenny pretty Mamma Doosa."

"His mother," said one of the men, in a low voice.

And then, for a few moments, nobody knew what to say.

Lenny was the first to speak:

"Tate me home now see Doosa. Met, I do 'id you—you tate me."

Meg was confounded for a few moments, and then her mother-wit came to her aid, and she answered:

"But Doosa is coming here herself to take Lenny home."

"Doosa tome here, tate Lenny home?"

"Yes, and Lenny must be a good boy till Doosa comes."

"Doosa say so?"

"Yes, Doosa say so."

"Den Lenny will——" he said, gaping, and adding:

"Lenny so seepy! me so seepy!"

"Well, then, lay on its old grannam breast, and go to sleep, my little angel," said the old woman, gathering him up to her bosom.

"No, no, no, no! lay on Met lap. Met dit Lenny seep," he said, wriggling himself away from the crone, and going up to Meg.

What girl does not doat on little children? What girl, under these circumstances, would not have met the baby's advances with delight?

The poor young daughter of thieves and beggars took the child up in her arms and looked around for a seat.

"Well, then, if you have got to nurse him, I will give you my chair," said the old woman, rising and throwing herself down upon the bed.

Meg took the seat, and arranged the drowsy child comfortably on her lap.

"Wock me! wock me, Met!" said little Lenny.

There were no rockers on the ricketty chair, but Meg moved her body backwards and forwards, and so gave the baby the best rocking she could.

"Now sin' to me, Met."

Meg looked perplexed at this request, for a moment, but soon recovered herself. Fortunately, Mother Goose's melodies are the common property of infant humanity, from the royal palace to the rag-picker's hut, and Meg struck up the nursery-classic—

"By, Baby-Bunting!"

She had a very sweet voice, which certainly soothed the child, for he listened in drowsy delight. He well understood that he himself was the Baby-Bunting in question. But when she sang the next line:

"Popper's gone a-hunting,"

He opened his sleepy eyes, and said:

"No, no; me dot no popper!"

"Never mind; some Baby-Buntings have—

"Mommer's gone a-milking."

"No, no; Lenny mammer don't go miltin'! *Dane* do miltin, and *Mawy*, and *Suzy*—down home in tountry. And Lenny do wid 'em too—see milt tow," he exclaimed, quite waking up, as the memory of the rural pleasures of Old Lyon Hall flashed over his mind.

"Well, never mind; some mommers do, you know—

"Sister's gone a-silking."

"Lenny aint dot no sister—not one," he said.

"Brother's gone to get a skin
To wrap my Baby-Bunting in—
A pretty little rabbit-skin,
To wrap my Baby-Bunting in."

"No, no, no; Lenny ain't dot no brudder. *Dit* do after yabbits," said Lenny, very drowsily.

He was almost asleep, and the girl continued her chanting; but presently, as his eyes were about closing, he suddenly started up:

"Met!"

"What does my pretty want?"

"When Doosa tomes, wate me up."

"Yes, that I will."

"Dood night, Met!"

"Good night, little angel!"

"Tiss me first, Met; tiss Lenny dood-night, Met!"

The girl stooped and kissed the child almost passionately, and murmured:

"Who could hurt him, the darling?"

But Lenny's eyelids were weighed down with sleep, and he was almost gone again, when, once more he called:

"Met, I fordot to say my p'ayers. Hear me say my p'ayers, Met?"

And, heavy with sleep as he was, he slipped off her lap, knelt down at her knee, and folded his little hands, and bowed his little head, and opened his baby-mouth, in "the simplest form of words that infant-lips can try:"

"Now I 'ay me down to s'eep,
P'ay de Lord my soul to teep;
If I die before I wate,
P'ay de Lord my soul to tate."

This was the little evening prayer that had been taught him, with much trouble, by his mother.

It was uttered now in a place and among people who had probably never heard a prayer before.

Yet, perhaps, no purer orisons from priest or prelate arose to the throne of the Most High that night.

"Now me done. Now me do seep," said Lenny, drowsily, climbing up to Meg's lap and putting his arms around her neck and nestling his head upon her bosom.

"Bless the darling!" said the girl, as she gathered him closer and supported him comfortably.

And again he was almost asleep, when again he started up and called out:

"Met!"

"What is it now, my pretty?"

"Don't you fordet to wate me up when mamma Doosa, tomes."

"No, I won't, my pretty."

"Now I do seep, sure 'nough. Dood night, Met."

"Good night, little angel."

"More tiss."

She stooped and pressed her lips to his baby lips again.

He opened his drowsy eyes to look at her and say:

"Lenny love Met." And with the words in his mouth he fell fast asleep.

And Meg continued to rock him with a gentle motion and sing to him in a soothing tone.

Meanwhile the old woman lay resting on her bed, and the two men sat drinking at the ricketty table.

"You'd better take them things to old Israel and get 'em out'n the way in case of accident; and mind what he gives you for 'em. Them's rale jewels, if *I* know anythink about rale jewels," said the old woman from her bed.

"Which you don't. Not the least. But them's rale, sure enough; because it aint possible as a rich lady, rolling in gold, would go for to put her onliest child into imitation trash," said Black Bill.

"Well then you better go and make sure of 'em. There'll be a hue and cry next."

"There is a hue and cry now, I shouldn't wonder; only it won't come down our way."

"Well, anyhow, why don't you go and take the things to the Jew?"

"Because we must wait here for the gentleman. I saw him on the Strand arter Bill carried off the child. He said he was coming to settle to-night," said Roger.

"One of you can stay here to see him and the other can go and sell the jewels."

"Not if we knows it," laughed both the brothers, speaking at once.

"We wants to stay here together to see the gentleman and get the money," said Red Roger.

"So we can have fair play and diwide it equal, share and share alike," added Black Bill.

"And then we wants to go together to Israel's to sell the jewels and get the price," pursued Red Roger.

—"So we can diwide the same fair and equal," added Black Bill.

By this it will be seen that there was no "honor among thieves" in this case. Neither would trust the other.

"Here he is now," said Roger, as a step was heard upon the stairs.

A few moments after, there was a rap at the door.

Black Bill opened it and admitted Everage.

"You have got the child?" he eagerly demanded.

But before any one could reply, his eyes fell upon little Lenny sleeping on the girl Meg's lap.

"Yes, as your honor sees, we've got him fast enough," answered Roger.

Everage approached the sleeping child and gazed in his tranquil face.

"Did he cry much?" he inquired, in a subdued tone.

"'Cry?'" laughed Black Bill. "'Cry?'—Lord love you, sir, no! He thought it was all a frolic, and he whooped 'stop thief' with the lustiest on 'em till the clorryfum quieted of him."

"But when he was brought here?"

"Oh, he was asleep then."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed Everage, fairly jumping off his feet with fright, "has he been in that state ever since?"

"Lord bless your honor, no, sir! He woke up bright as a sky lark the minute we flung water in his face."

"And *then* was he frightened? Did he cry for his mother?"

"Lord love you, no, sir! Never see such a plucky little cove. He scolded us men, and he petted Meg, and he put his precious little cap on the old woman's head. Such a figure it made of her—ha! ha! ha!—ho! ho! ho!" laughed both brothers.

"Then he was not terrified or distressed?"

"*He* terrified or distressed! You ought to have heard how he ordered us all around until he got sleepy, and then he insisted on Meg rocking him to sleep. And she did it."

"Has he had his supper?"

"No, your honor. He didn't ask for no supper. Why, sir, his hands were full of buns when I snatched him up and run off with him," said Black Bill.

"But if he wakes up hungry, what have you got to give him?"

"Well, unless the old woman has a bit of bread and a lump of cheese, I don't know as there's anything else."

"I thought so. I must go out and buy him some milk. Where can I find any hereabouts?"

"Well, sir, there's a shop at the corner of the next street where they sells it. But, master, how about the pay?"

"Oh, you shall have it," said Everage, taking out his old portmonaie and drawing from its interior three ten pound notes, the price of his valuable jewelled gold watch and chain, his own seal ring, a costly microscope that had once been his delight, and other sacred treasures spared from sacrifice till now.

"I promised you ten pounds each, I think. Here they are." And he handed a note to each of his confederates.

"And now," he said, "I must go and get some milk for the child."

"I will go, your worship," said Roger.

"Very well. I shall thank you. Here is a sixpence," said Everage.

"If your honor pleases, I must buy a mug or summut to fetch it in."

"Here is another sixpence. And now make haste. I want to see the child comfortable before I leave him to-night."

"All right, your honor; I'll be back in no time," said Roger, starting out of the room.

"But—— where are you going to lay him?" inquired Everage, glancing at the old woman's foul bed with a visible shudder.

"Oh, your honor, it's all right. He shall sleep with me," said the crone.

"No, I would rather he did not. Can't he sleep with the girl?"

"But she shares my bed, your honor."

"Have you no other bedding?" he inquired, glancing around the room.

"Lord love you, sir, where would the likes of us get it? No, your honor, you see all we have."

"Where do the men sleep?"

"La, sir, anywheres or nowheres! most in general nowheres! If so be they happen to be at home a night they just fling themselves down onto the floor."

"Well," sighed the poor gentleman, "I suppose there is no help for it to-night, and he must sleep as he can; but to-morrow I must get some clean bedding for his use. I wish you to take good care of the little fellow for the few hours or days he will be with you; but I must get him out of the country as soon as possible."

With Everage "as soon as possible" meant as soon as by any means he could raise the money to do so.

"If you please, sir——" began Meg, in a timid voice.

"Well, my girl, what is it?" inquired Everage, turning and looking at her, and thinking what a fine frank face was hers, notwithstanding that she was the child and companion of thieves and outcasts.

"If you please, sir, I would not lay him on that bed. He aint hardened to it, and he could not sleep, sir. It is full of bugs," said Meg.

"But what's to be done? You can't hold him in your arms all night."

"'Deed I'd sooner do it, sir, than see him eat up alive. But please, sir, if so be I might make so bold——"

"Yes, yes, to be sure. Go on."

—"The shops is all open yet, sir, and if so be as you could send out and buy him a little clean blanket—a coarse one would do—I could make him a pallet in the corner of the room and cover him over with his own little mantle," said Meg.

"Well thought of, my girl. How much will it take to buy one?" inquired Everage, for his funds were very, very low.

"A crown would do it—maybe less."

"Can you do this errand for me, my man?" inquired Everage, turning to Black Bill.

"If your honor wills; but it will take seven shillings at the least," said the ruffian.

Everage produced the required amount and handed it over to the man, who arose and lounged out of the room.

"And now I must not forget this," said Everage, picking up a bundle he had brought in with him, unrolling it, and displaying a full suit of baby's clothing, including the night-gown, all of the cheapest and plainest material, faded and patched, but perfectly clean; for it belonged to his own little two-year-old Clara, and had been privately taken from his wife's bureau drawer. "He must not remain in his fine clothes lest he should be accidentally seen. Put this night-gown on him to-night, and to-morrow dress him in this suit; and be sure to hide away or destroy the others. Do you understand?" he inquired, as he passed the bundle over to Meg.

"Yes, please sir."

The door opened and the two brothers came in together—Black Bill, with a small, coarse, cradle-blanket on his arm; and Red Roger, with a mug of milk in his hand.

Everage himself took the purchases from them, and gave them into the keeping of the girl, whom he trusted more than all the rest of the gang.

Then he waited until he saw Meg undress the child and put it in his clean, patched night-gown, while little Lenny slept heavily the sleep of fatigue through the whole process.

"Now, if you will hold him on your knees half a minute, I'll spread his pallet," said the girl, laying the child on the lap of Everage.

As soon as his pallet was prepared, she took him, still sleeping, and laid him on it, covering him over with his own little mantle.

"And you'd better keep the milk handy so as to give it to him to drink if he should wake hungry or thirsty," said Everage.

"Yes, sir, I will. I will just fling myself down on the floor by his pallet, and take care of him, sir," replied Meg.

"And you shall not go unrewarded for your care of him," said the poor gentleman, loftily.

And then, having given his confederates an extra caution in regard to the child, and promised, or rather threatened, to look in the next night, Everage left the house and bent his steps homeward.

Surely little Lenny's guardian angel inspired poor Meg that night. She laid herself down on the bare boards beside his pallet, and resting her head upon her bent arm, with her face towards the child, watched him until she became too drowsy to keep her eyes open; and even then she slept like a watch dog, on the alert, and at the slightest motion of her charge she would wake up to see if he wanted water, or milk, or to spread the mantle over him.

But Lenny slept soundly until morning.

At his usual time of waking, a little after sunrise, he opened his eyes. At first he stared around himself in utter bewilderment. Then he saw Meg bending over him, and he recognized her face, and he remembered the incidents of the preceding night.

"Why didn't you, Met?" he inquired, looking reproachfully in her face.

"Why didn't I do what, my pretty?" smiled the girl.

"Wate me up when Doosa tomed."

"But Doosa didn't come, my pretty bird."

"Doosa didn't tome?"

"No, pretty."

"But Doosa say she tome."

"So she did; but then she said she couldn't, and now she says she will come to-day."

"Tome to-day?"

"Yes."

"Tome soon?"

"Yes."

Lenny smiled, and then all out of season, he remembered a certain matutinal formula that he had forgotten under his unusual circumstances, and he suddenly said:

"Dood mornin', Met!"

Meg, taken all aback by this unexpected salutation, did not respond.

"Dood mornin', Met. Why don't you say dood mornin' to me?"

"Good morning, pretty bird."

"Me not pretty bird—me 'ittle boy."

"Good morning, little boy."

"Tiss dood mornin', Met."

The girl caught him up in her arms and kissed him enthusiastically.

To her dark and gloomy life he had come like some beautiful, brilliant bird of Heaven, and she prized him and delighted in him. It was something of the same sort of natural passion that a child feels for its first wonderful wax doll, or its first beautiful live pet, only it was much more intense, inasmuch as this was a living, loving, talking doll—a beautiful, intelligent human pet.

And so she kissed him, and hugged him, and shook him, and danced him, and prattled to him, and called him all the sweet names that, in such cases, spring spontaneously to the lips of girls and women.

And Lenny, in his gracious, genial nature, gave kiss for kiss, and caress for caress.

I think if poor Drusilla, waking in her agony of bereavement, that same morning, could have seen, as in a magic glass, these two friends—the girl and the baby,—she would have been contented,—no, not that, but she would have felt comforted.

"Lenny love Met," said the child, patting her cheeks.

"And 'Met' loves Lenny dearly, dearly, dearly! and nobody shall hurt him—they shall kill 'Met' first!"

Now, as "hurt" and "kill" were words that had never been introduced into this cherished baby's vocabulary, he did not understand and did not know how to reply; but he felt that love was meant throughout, and he knew how to answer *that*. So he patted Meg's cheeks and kissed her lips.

And now as the long-lingering light of day stole into that wretched attic-chamber, it brought out strange pictures. The yellow rays of the sun, striking obliquely through the window in the roof, fell upon the corner occu-

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pied by Meg and Lenny, and lighted up a picturesque group,—the beautiful, golden-haired, fine-eyed baby-boy, hair as one of Raffaelle's cherub angels, with his rosy arms clasped around the neck of the wild, dark, gipsyish girl, who held him on her lap, and their surroundings,—the poor pallet, the little stone-jug of milk, the bare boards, and the broken walls. This was the only sunny scene in the room.

In the shadows were other scenes, best left in darkness,—the lesbian in her foul bed, and the two men sprawling on the naked floor. All these were dead to all surrounding life, for they were heavily sleeping off the effects of the last night's gin-drinking.

To return to the "sunny" spot occupied by the girl and the baby. She was still caressing him.

"Would Lenny like his breakfast now? she asked.

"Yes, Lenny like beefsteak. But go in bed-room first."

"Go—where?" inquired the girl, quite bewildered.

"In bed-room! bed-room! don't I say?"

"Oh, bed-room!" My honored lord, we have got no bed-room here, but 'Mat' will wash you clean until she ?"

"Yes, 'Mat' wash."

"Will Lenny be afraid to stay here while 'Mat' goes to fetch water ?"

"No!" what 'fraid for?

"You don't know? Well, I hope you never will."

"What 'fraid' what 'fraid' what 'fraid?" peremptorily commanded the child, stamping his foot.

"Hold he—ha!, naughty," said Meg, after some little perplexity.

"Hold him—ha!—Meg!"

"And will Lenny let 'Mat' go for some water ?"

"Yes."

"And sit here and don't move until I come ?"

"Yes."

Away ran the girl, and as quickly as she could borrow a bucket and fetch the water she returned to the room.

She washed the child very thoroughly and then crossed him to the open window to dry him, provided by Revenge.

"Just see what Lenny tore," observed the child.

"Oh, Lenny has got no clean clothes here, so Lenny must wear these," said the girl.

And the child found her will was content with the answer.

"And now Lenny will have his breakfast!" she added.

"Yes, and Mat have her too," answered the child.

The girl then went to the sleeping men to fish in their pockets. She knew very well that both had counted their employer in the matter of the price of the milk and the blanket that their sot had seen on to buy the drink-offering, and so she judged they must have the odd change they had wrestled Revenge out of her in their possession.

She was right. She found a sixpence in Revenge's pocket and two shillings in Rifle's. She replaced all the money except one of the shillings, which she confiscated to the use of the little lurcher, as she called Lenny.

Having possessed herself of this fund, she turned to the child and took him by the hand, saying:

"Will Lenny take a walk with 'Mat'?"

"Lenny want bekfis first."

"Well, we are going out to buy milk for breakfast—also new milk. Will Lenny go?"

"Yes, from home?" (Home?) "Yes, Lenny go."

"But Dosen won't come before we get back."

"Well, do Lenny go and 'Mat.'"

And they walked out together down to the corner of the alley to the cellar, where the milk was sold.

And Meg bought new milk and fresh rolls, and a little cheap white mug and plate, all for nine pence.

And then she took Lenny back to the attic and gave him his breakfast there.

And through all this the beasts in the attic slept on.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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## ONE FAULT.

### By MRS. C. VATCHAN.

In the fall of 18— I was invited to dine with the Lyndons. The party was to be a small one, consisting of family friends, but was to be followed in the evening by a conversazione, or party of literary and other celebrities. I had met them once or twice before. The Lyndons had been living in a very quiet way, and were only in moderate circumstances when I first made their acquaintance, and I confess my curiosity was somewhat excited as to the change in their style of life and social position which enabled them to give these parties and entertain such visitors. Otherwise I should hardly have accepted the invitation; for I was not in strong health, and had no desire to be shown up to a group of strangers as the celebrated Eastern traveler.

I had hunted elephants and tigers in India, and even those fierce and more formidable wild beasts, the Sepoys and mutineers, during the rebellion; but I did not consider that any of these had been entitled me to public notice. I felt humble, rather, and grateful to Him who had preserved me my efforts in resisting those poor bullies from the hands of the monsters at Hyderabad. I was not proud. I shrank from praise of that sort. Not in my own strength, but through Christ, I fought and I conquered, and I could not bear to hear people talk as if I had. Above all, I had warned the horrors of that scene recalled to me; and that, perhaps, more than anything else, made me shrink from the sort of exhibition which the Lyndons seemed determined to force upon me. Still, for once, under the influence of the certainty I have mentioned, that I should be by a yet undeveloped motive, I consented to enter such a scene.

I little guessed the results of the evening, the very anticipation of which turned out so full of strange life that in this life such wondrous events can never again form the main current of one's existence.

Among the guests at the dinner were Mr. and Mrs. Ligon, an I shall call them, a young couple introduced by my hostess before we went to the table. The introduction took place among a number of others, and somewhat hurriedly, as dinner was announced before they were complete. I had, therefore, no opportunity to notice with particularity my new acquaintances.

For some reason—perhaps because being a stranger—I was considered the guest of honor—I was conducted to the upper end of the dining-room. I took Mrs. Lyndon to dinner, and was seated in her right hand. Opposite me were Mrs. Ligon and the gentleman who took her down to dinner, and next to them on my right were Mr. Abbott, a gay widow, and Mr. Ligon, who was next to me on my left.

Seated at table and preliminaries over, I had leisure to observe my neighbors, which has been a habit of mine all over the world.

I soon saw that Mrs. Lynch, though living now in an elegant house in one of the squarest squares, was the same woman she had been in a smaller, though still wide country square. Her husband was a rich man, though Arcadia Square was considered house and considered still wider connexions before. She had stood still while connexions before. She had stood still while others, mingling with large minds and large hearts, had improved her husband into a really polished gentleman, and a man of great and varied knowledge. She had apparently competent servants who had served the dinner well; but she had so flurried everyone, coursed over, and found fault, as to greatly disconcert and interrupt them. Seeing that her dinner-party was all she thought, bold cares intent," I turned my attention to those of my immediate neighbors.

Beside me sat Mrs. Abbott, the gay widow, with my experience enabled me to make out as I down as "fast." Seeing me glance at her, she addressed me in a mincing, affected tone, asking me if it was not fearfully hot in India; if it was not dreadfully unhealthy; and various such sort of trap I used; also, if it was not perfectly delightful to sit on the Ganges in a bungalow.

I believe I did keep my countenance, for I am not easily disconcerted, and I do not expect people whom I meet to be well-informed relative to things they have had no opportunity of learning; but a display of conceit and ignorance disgusts me. I therefore replied in Mrs. Abbott's inquiries as civilly and briefly as possible, and left her to return to her flirtation with Mr. Ligon, which was carried on with many affected whisperings and much loud laughter; which, so far as I could perceive, was about nothing at all. Mr. Ligon had exchanged a few words with me, and then devoted himself to his fair neighbor. He was a handsome, polished young man, and his eye was cold and his manner devoid of sympathy.

I now turned my attention to Mrs. Ligon. Her face was the most pallid I ever saw in a living she saddest; and yet I detected no evidence of illness to account for those circumstances. Her cheek was round, fair, and almost transparent, and her eye was bright and clear. She had not an evident consciousness of the manners of her husband, which I considered extremely vulgar. Her quiet reflected into and colored her own. She was not conscious of the movements of the table, of the loud laughter, or of the flirtation going on glance at her husband.

Mrs. Lyndon was a clever little gentleman, with a great flow of words, which I suppose he considered conversation. He monopolized her and gave me a fair share of the latter, when she would slowly relax from her stiffness, and talk to me as if I were a human being, fairly. But I soon saw that upon her husband's fine, self-seeking personalities she looked, or seemed to look, blind. I also retorted the glance with a secret of almost despair, which I could not account for, as I saw a still look of terror grow above the sunken and hollow eyes, while deep lines of ghastly hue sings disfigured the marble pallor.

"Mr. Lyndon, I must positively take you to task, hold," I said to myself, "she dreads her husband's anger."

At that instant, she saw that I was observing her, and a faint flush rose over the pale face. She turned to her neighbor, and, for the first time, volunteered a remark. It was this—she once even laughed aloud. I saw that she was a fine, intelligent woman, and capable of her decoration, and I saw by the glances she cast at her husband that she was in subjection to duly idea.

I think when she smiled, grew wondrously beautiful. Its pure whiteness seemed to receive a warmth from the radiance of her face, and a charm in the rainbow of those eyes,—there was a sweetness and tenderness about the corners of sweet lips,—sweetness that now and then gleamed out in the midst of habitual sadness, like sun in the fog. A few moments ago, she sat there—a sad, pale, silent woman of fifty. Now, in the joyous girl, who seemed not to have seen more than twenty summers—so suddenly had the years rolled back.

I saw that she had no little time and thought for me, but I was not offended. I felt that I was there to study people as others are to attend the theatre, and I was glad to find that I still had the power of interesting myself in the human drama.

This continued for some time. Meanwhile the dishes of fruit and wine had been placed on the table, and forgotten. The gentlemen were in a grim humor, and the ladies were much annoyed. I was under the guise of jest; and the companion, who had been assigned to me, was left to my care. He still watched his wife and every audit of her husband's smouldering fire. I saw that he did not wondering how long this could go on without an explosion.

All this time I had said nothing to him, and had left the ice to me, and thought for me. But, as I saw that he was getting sullen, and that the ladies me were so absorbed in their own private affairs as to be quite unconscious of my observation.

At last, Mrs. Ligon, in the order of conversation, for one moment half herself, beautifully-formed hand upon the table. The gloves had been removed when she sat down to dinner, and I saw a magnificent opal on the third finger, which was placed as keeper of the wedding-ring, a plain ring, evidently a very old one, and considerably worn and hollow.

"Ah, my dear," said Mrs. Lynch, "I see you have not yet learned to wear jewels. Mrs. Lyndon has given me the address; and yet I detected no evidence of such a weakness on

you are willing to accept my affection on my own terms."

She firmly replied:

"I must know that past, and I will furnish the key to it myself by telling you that I am convinced that the Anna Moore who is now known as Mrs. Marsden is my mother. She eloped with you from the house of Mr. Horton, whither you had gone as a suitor to his younger daughter. You saw the companion, and loved her better than the heiress. She disappeared from her old home, and remained away two years. She then came back, faded and half broken-hearted. She refused to give any account of herself during her absence, but the friends of her youth would not turn their backs upon her, and she was received into the family of a widowed brother of Mr. Horton, whose children she took charge of. Her employer emigrated to Virginia, and there, where her story was unknown, Miss Moore married her present husband. Am I not correct in my statements, sir?"

Nina might have talked on much longer, for her companion sat staring at her with wild eyes and pallid face. The cool hardihood with which she related the history of her own mother to the author of her wretchedness afforded him a painful glimpse into the nature he had to deal with. It was a bitter revelation to him, and he began to dread this creature for whose presence near him he had so ardently yearned. When Mr. Hastings did not reply, Nina again asked:

"Have I not stated the truth, sir? And now I demand as my right the history you are so anxious to keep from me. Tell me, tell me of that past, for I must know all."

In answer to this imperial demand, Mr. Hastings brokenly said:

"It is just that my sin should find me—that my punishment should come from *her* child. Oh, Nina, Nina! have you no pity for your unhappy father? no love to give in return for all he has lavished on you, from the very hour of your birth? You are dearer to me than Opal, for you are the child of the woman I loved better than my own soul."

"Yet you gave her shame and despair. Is that what adoring love lavishes on its object?" she bitterly asked. "How can you expect me to return your affection, when I have seen the broken-hearted woman who dared not claim me as her daughter? No, I do not love you—at moments, I almost hate you, even if you are my father."

Mr. Hastings covered his face with his hands, and hot tears, wrung from his wounded and bleeding heart, fell heavily upon the table on which he leaned. When he regained sufficient calmness, he sadly said:

"I could scarcely have expected a different result when the truth became known to you, and that is why I so long and carefully withheld it. In a moment of high-wrought excitement, when I believed you to be dying, I told you the cherished secret of my life. If I had believed it possible for you to live, I would still have guarded it from you, and with good cause; for I feel that you are making a most ungenerous use of my confidence. You are forcing me to betray what I consider it vitally important to conceal from you. What use do you propose to make of the knowledge you have gained, Nina? I trust that you will spare your unfortunate mother, and never permit her to know that my weakness laid bare the record of our wretched past before you."

Nina steadily replied:

"If you do not give me the story in its minutest particulars, I shall apply to her for them. Choose your own course, sir, but my mind is irrevocably made up; I will know all, either from you or her."

Mr. Hastings regarded her almost with horror. In broken tones he exclaimed:

"So young! so hard! Where did you get that nature from, Nina? It is not Anna's, nor is it mine."

"You forget, sir, that my mother had little reason to believe that *you* could not be hard. How else could you have deserted her, and married another woman while she was yet living? I am impatient for the revelation for which I am waiting. The afternoon is getting on, and Mrs. Hastings may come home earlier than she intended, in the fear that you and I might meet in her absence."

He saw that no alternative remained to him. He must speak at the bidding of this imperious and determined creature, and nerving himself for the task, Mr. Hastings presently began:

"Since you already know so much, little remains to be told. I met with Susan Horton at Saratoga, and was attracted by her beauty and fortune, for the last was important to me then. I followed her home, and there met the passion of my life in the person of a young girl who had been reared and educated as a dependent in the Horton family. There was a fate in it from which neither of us could escape. The love with which Anna Moore inspired me spurned all prudential considerations, and it was returned with equal ardor. It was a true union of hearts if one ever existed on earth.

"I lured Anna from her home under a promise of marriage; but I was too poor to make her really my wife. One of my college friends read over us a form of marriage, and Anna believed herself lawfully wedded to me."

Nina uttered an exclamation of joy.

"I am glad to hear that, sir, though it but adds to the turpitude of your own conduct."

"Alas! yes; I played the part of a villain. I know that without having such hard words spoken to me by you. But you are pitiless, Nina. In your sympathy for your mother you forget how bitterly I have suffered for my evil doing. Ah! if I could lay bare my heart before you, and show you how deeply I have repented that wrong—how willingly I would have repaired it, you might have some compassion for me, badly as I have acted."

Mr. Hastings paused, and Nina impatiently said:

"Go on, sir, if you please. I wish to know all that you will tell me."

With a heavy sigh he resumed:

"I had a few thousand dollars of my own, and I determined to abandon the practice of law, which I had not found lucrative, and embark in some speculations in South America which held out brilliant promise of reward, and I embarked with Anna for Rio Janeiro.

"There a year of as perfect happiness as mortals ever enjoyed, flew by on wings of light. Your birth gave the crowning joy to my poor Anna; but when I held you in my arms I first felt how irreparably I had wronged both mother and child. It was too late then to confess the base deception of which I had been guilty; for I dreaded what might follow if Anna became aware of the falsehood of which she had been made the victim.

"My business affairs had prospered, and I believed that I was in a fair way to secure the wealth I so ardently desired. I became most anxious to atone for the injury I had done your mother, and I was seriously thinking of becoming a Catholic that I might have a pretext for having the ceremony of marriage performed between us a second time; for you are aware that the Romish church does not recognize the sacredness of the service outside of its own pale.

"But just as I had determined on this course, a reverse as sudden as unexpected overwhelmed the fabric of my prosperity, and in a few weeks I found myself a ruined man. Anna was a sweet angel of consolation to me in my reverses, and I loved her better than ever. Just as I was beginning to recover from that blow, and consider what was best to be done both for her and myself, another followed, more crushing still, for it snatched from me the best treasure of my life and made me poor indeed.

"A letter for Anna came from New York, and I gave it to her with my own hand, never suspecting the fatal nature of its contents. She read the dying confession of Charles Linley, which assured her that she was not a wife. He knew that she was living with me under that delusion, and he stated that he could not die without revealing to her the wickedness of which he had consented to become the instrument."

Mr. Hastings paused, overcome by the painful and humiliating memories that crowded on his mind.

With flashing eyes Nina exclaimed:

"And my mother refused to accept such tardy justice as you would then have been willing to afford. Was it not so, sir?"

He looked at her reproachfully, and drearily replied:

"No—she could not refuse what was never offered. The scene that passed between us destroyed all hope of future happiness with the being I had so deeply outraged. I plainly saw that I would never be forgiven, and I forebore to take on myself or put on her a yoke that could but gall us both. On Anna's part all confidence was destroyed, and she seemed to have but one wish—to escape from me and return to the home she had deserted."

"I represented to her the impossibility of taking her child there with her, and she coldly replied that the child was mine to do as I pleased with. *She* had the right to go whither she pleased, but you belonged to me by the decision of the law if I chose to claim you, and she would not dispute my right to retain you.

"It is useless to dwell on the bitter suffering of those days. We parted forever. Anna wept many tears over you, but she never asked me to surrender you to her keeping. She knew well that, burdened with a young child, she could not hope to be received by her former friends, and to them she was bent on returning.

"I forced her to accept a considerable sum of money, though I almost impoverished myself to raise it, and she embarked for New York. I placed you in the care of a faithful nurse, and gave my attention to winding up my business. I saved enough to enable me to return to my native land at the end of a year, and place you in the family of Mr. Somers, whose wife was a cousin of my own. He undertook to carry out such arrangements as I might wish to make for you, and I came to Mississippi to resume the practice of my profession.

"I met with Mrs. Hastings, and dazzled by her beauty and fortune, I married her. I had heard nothing from Anna, for she had cut herself off from me as completely as if I were dead; but a few months after my own marriage I saw hers announced in a Southern paper. I was glad of it; I hoped she might find peace at least in the new tie she had formed; but from what I have since heard I fear it was not so.

"When you were little more than four years old, I caused you to be placed with Mrs. Lyme, and there you remained till you left her yourself. At one time I thought of bringing you here as my niece, but I feared that Mrs. Hastings would discover the deception, and I finally determined to leave you to suppose that you were to be left dependent on your own exertions, that you might be willing to accept the situation of governess to your sister. I could think of no other way to bring you beneath my roof, and through all these years, Nina, the most absorbing desire of my heart has been to have the little darling I had so tenderly petted brought back to the shelter of my own roof. Tell me that you forgive me the evil I have done—that you will love me, and remain here as the solace of my life."

Nina drew herself from the caressing arm that sought to enfold her. She bitterly said:

"So, even my own mother deserted me! Yet she was right to leave *your* child behind her, for what could she expect from her but ingratitude and hardness of nature? Yet you—*you!* the spoiler, ask me to forgive and love you! Is *that* in my power, do you think, Mr. Hastings?"

He shrank from the fire of her eyes, the cruel hardness of her tones, and almost humbly asked:

"Have you not humiliated me enough by forcing this confession from me, Nina? that you thus stab me to the heart by your unfilial reproaches! You do not know how deeply they wound me."

"*Unfilial!*" she repeated, with scorn. "What duty do I owe you, who outraged a good and true woman by putting so base a deception upon her? Though she deserted me in my babyhood, I avenge her cause by telling you to your face that I will never forgive you for the wrong you did her in the eye of the law alone. In that of Heaven, she is your true wife, and the daughter you have placed above me in everything is the illegitimate one—not I."

Her cheeks were flaming, her eyes flashing, and at that moment her beauty was that of an enraged tigress. Her father looked at her and shuddered. What spirit had he evoked in this creature who had it in her power to become a fearful Nemesis to him? He deprecatingly said:

"I have at least done my duty by *you*, Nina. You have little to reproach me with, for my tender care has always shielded you from harm, and my liberality has afforded you the advantages you have enjoyed."

"And what were they?" was the scornful rejoinder. "To be cast off from kith and kin; to be left to believe myself thrown upon the world without a provision, that I might fit myself for the inferior position in your family you thought fit to assign me. For what have I to thank you, oh! most tender and considerate father?"

The bitter mockery of her tones stung him; he arose and sternly and proudly replied:

"It is enough. The child I hoped would prove a comfort to me turns on me with reproaches, when I fondly expected a different return for what I have done for her. Most men would have left you to find your place in an orphan asylum, to be reared by charity and made the drudge of more fortunate people; but I—I loved you, and I endeavored by every means in my power to atone for the wrong I have done you, and this is my reward. Oh, Nina! In this hour I awake from the latest delusion of my life. Is there no pity for me in your heart, that you crush me in this reckless manner?"

Something in his tone seemed to touch her. She too arose, and, casting herself upon his breast, cried out:

"Take me to your heart, and make me feel that you do indeed love me by securing to me the happiness you can win for me, and I will be your child in affection as I am in blood."

Mr. Hastings folded her to his breast, and Nina felt his hot tears falling like rain upon her hair and brow. They assured her of her power over him, and she determined to use it to its utmost limit.

Again they seated themselves, and Nina submitted now to have his arm encircle her slender form. She looked up into his face with pleading eyes, and softly murmured:

"Forgive me, but my heart is very sore. You can scarcely understand my feelings, father. Ah! it is a humiliating and wretched thought that I can never bestow upon you that precious title save when we are alone. That I must stifle the natural feelings of my heart because a jealous eye is ever on us. How long do you think we can live in so painful and unnatural a position toward each other?"

"If I had not betrayed myself, we could have done so easily enough," he sadly replied. "I had settled it all in my own mind. After Opal's marriage, you would have fallen naturally into her place. I could have found a lover worthy of you, to whom I would have been willing to give you, and I should have found means to provide such a dower for you as would have been suitable to your actual position. But now all is changed, and I see plainly that it is for you to dictate what our future course shall be. State your wishes, Nina, and so far as I can I will carry them out."

"I have but one wish on earth," she impetuously exclaimed, "and you will think me mad when I express it; but I will do so, regardless of consequences. I was the first choice of Godfrey Fenton's heart; he loved me—I am *sure* he did; and I—oh, I, I loved him to that degree that I shall perish at your feet if you persist in making Opal his wife! *She* cares nothing for him; you know that as well as I do; and he is marrying her for the fortune that will be hers. Make me rich enough to become his bride; break off the match that is in progress, and bring him back to his first allegiance. This is what I ask you to do—what *must* be done if you would save both your children from utter misery."

Mr. Hastings listened to this wild demand with a helpless feeling of bewilderment. He presently faltered:

"But that is impossible, Nina. I have no power to do what you ask. Fenton would never consent to such an exchange, and—and the fortune I hope to endow you with must be saved from my own allowance from my wife. She is very liberal, and the control I have over her large income will enable me in a few years to speculate and increase the small sum I can at present command. Besides, Mrs. Markland would never consent. Her heart is fixed on the union of her son with Opal."

"What does her consent signify?" she defiantly asked.

"It signifies so much that I dare not provoke her by proposing so wild a scheme as this. For years she has known the history of my connexion with your mother. A cousin of hers who was known to me in South America gave her all the details, and Mrs. Markland has held them in terrorem over me, threatening to reveal the whole story to my wife if I refused my consent to the union of her son with Opal."

"You are very weak to submit to such thraldom. What if she had told Mrs. Hastings?"

"I can easily answer that. A separation between us would have ensued, for Mrs. Hastings is almost insane on one subject. If she suspected that she was not my first love, that I had lived with another woman claiming her as my wife before I met her, she would leave me. That is why I submitted—why I have permitted this marriage to be hurried on before Opal is really old enough to become a bride. My dear Nina, recall your heart from the betrothed of your sister; forget the mad dream that has bewildered you, and trust your future to me. It shall be bright; I promise you it shall."

Nina burst into a hysterical passion of tears, and, with sobs of anguish, cried out:

"I cannot—I cannot! I love him—I love him, and he knows it. I have told him as much since I have been here. That evening on the lake, I spoke such words to Godfrey as he will never forget while life lasts. Send me away from here. I can not live and see him give himself to another! Let me go, I care not whither, so I escape seeing him bestow his hand upon my rival. I can not answer for myself. I might do something dreadful to Opal, and she has been good to me since I came here."

In extreme perturbation, Mr. Hastings reflected a few moments, and then sadly said:

"It will be best, perhaps. Since it is your wish, I will send you back to the North, and your allowance shall be liberal enough to enable you to live as my daughter should. Mrs. Somers will consent to receive you, I am sure; or, if you prefer it, you can return to Mrs. Lyme, and remain with her as a boarder. My care must still be over you, Nina, wherever you may go."

"Yes, you must provide for me suitably, I understand that. Oh, father, is it *impossible* to give me back my love—my life? Opal's heart is not in this marriage; she will rejoice if it is broken off."

"It will not be broken off, Nina. It is too late for that. Make up your mind to what is inevitable, for a few more weeks will find your sister on her way to Europe as Fenton's wife. If it were possible to arrest the hand of fate, I would do so for your sake, but I can not. You must submit to be guided by me, and I will do the best I can for your happiness and future welfare."

The excitement of the interview had exhausted Nina's strength, and she sunk back half fainting. Her father brought water from the sideboard in the hall, and bathed her hands and face; but he did not summon a servant to her assistance, lest the story of their long interview should be repeated to his jealous wife.

Finally, lifting her in his strong arms, he carried her to her room and placed her on the bed. Kissing her tenderly, he left her to such repose as she could find after the stormy emotions that had lately filled her heart, and returned to pace the library and think almost to madness of that one act in his early life which had clouded his days and filled his heart with remorse; for, weak as he was, Mr. Hastings was not altogether a bad man.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

While Nina lay almost in the grasp of death, a telegram from Newport reached Godfrey Fenton, which made him feel for a season as if he would do what Job's comforters tempted him to in vain—"curse God and die."

The paper only bore these words:

"Mr. Horton's will is found, and in the possession of Miss Lopez."

After all, Inez would regain her inheritance, and he was bound to another! But for the opportune illness of Nina Gordon he would, by this time, have been the husband of Opal. Was there no avenue of escape? he asked himself. Was his honor too deeply pledged to his latest love to enable him to break through such impediments as he had himself created to perfect freedom of action.

In Fenton's pursuit of her rival, the passion he felt for Inez had lost much of its ardor, but in the first moment of learning that she would regain her fortune, he felt that Inez was the true choice of his heart; that the emotions Opal elicited were born of vanity and a desire of success with so lovely and so reticent a creature as he had found her to be.

In the rebound of his feelings all his old love for Inez revived in full force, and when a letter came from her, informing him of the death of her father, and the certainty that the estate would soon pass into her possession, Fenton prepared himself for a final contest with his mother.

He had not much hope of success but he resolved to make a last effort to disenthral himself, if possible, from the bondage in which Mrs. Markland held him. After Dora and Jenny had set out for school the next morning, he sought his mother in her usual sitting-room and abruptly said:

"I have something to show you, mother, which is of deep interest to me. Here is a letter from Miss Lopez informing me that she has recovered her inheritance. I wish you to read it, for I think you will be touched by her artless expressions of confidence in me—of affection for one who has proved himself so unworthy to have won her love as I am."

Mrs. Markland coldly put aside the offered letter and icily said:

"I can only feel surprised to hear that Miss Lopez has written to you at all. If she had the true pride that a lady should possess, she would never seek to enter a family which she must be aware has already repudiated her alliance. The recovery of her fortune can make no difference to *you*, for you are in honor bound to fulfill your pledges to Opal."

"But, mother, I love Inez far the best; and Opal will not break her heart over my desertion, as, I am afraid, the other will. Besides, Inez will have great wealth entirely at her own disposal. If I gain that by my marriage, you need not care particularly which one is the bride elect."

"But I *do* care very much. It is my most ardent desire to claim Opal Hastings as my daughter, and I refuse to see Miss Lopez as such. Godfrey, if I thought you could be so false, so dishonored, as to break the tie you have formed for yourself, and that, too, on the very eve of your marriage, I would never speak to you again; I would no longer acknowledge you as my son. Have you no love for Opal that you can speak so coolly of giving her up? Think of all her beauty and sweetness—how tender her heart is, how gentle her disposition. She will make a model wife, and this young Cuban no doubt possesses all the fire of her countrywomen. She would never be the yielding and submissive wife that you will require. With your imperious temper, I am quite sure that you will find more happiness with Opal than with her rival."

Divided as his feelings were, Fenton listened to these arguments more calmly than his mother had hoped. He listlessly said:

"Perhaps you are right, ma'am, and—and—to tell you the truth, I hardly know which one I prefer. I was thinking more of Inez than of myself when I came here to appeal to you. She will suffer dreadfully when she becomes aware of my inconstancy. I really think that it will be better for all concerned for me to get out of this entanglement with the Hastings family, and give my hand to her who has the best right to it. I am bound in honor to both these girls; one adores me—the other accepts me because it is the will of others that she shall do so. I feel sure that Opal will gladly release me if I make an appeal to her, and I will do it if you will consent."

Mrs. Markland was quick to remark the difference in his manner of pleading now from that he had used but a few weeks before when he had entreated her to receive Inez as his wife. She had little faith in the depth or endurance of such love as Fenton had to give, and she was only more firmly determined that the bride she had chosen for him should be forced on his acceptance. She coldly replied:

"With my consent no such appeal shall be made to your betrothed. Of course she would reply by releasing you, for no other course would be possible to a refined and sensitive girl like Opal. You have keenly pursued her, for I have watched you through your wooing, and after professing such ardent love you have offered her, with what face can you turn on her and tell that it was all a sham? No, Godfrey; it is too late to recede now, and I feel assured that your heart is in the marriage that has been arranged for you, although you would persuade me that you still waver between the two you admire. Write to Miss Lopez and tell her the plain truth, or I shall do it for you."

"Mother," said Fenton, very gravely, "something tells me that I had better take the other course, that it will be safer for me to do so."

"*Safer?*" Do you think the jealousy of that Spanish girl will lead her to strike you to the heart? Absurd, my dear Godfrey! do not obscure your usual clear judgment with such ridiculous apprehensions."

"I scarcely know what I apprehend—certainly no personal injury from Inez, for she is incapable of inflicting it on any one; but I cannot put aside a presentiment that something dreadful will follow my union with Opal—I am haunted by it as by a shadow of evil."

Mrs. Markland scoffingly asked:

"How long is it since this prophetic spirit descended on you? and why should it foreshadow evil? In your position, I should have only the most brilliant anticipations. You are betrothed to the most charming of girls; you will have a liberal income secured to you, with the certainty of possessing great wealth at some future day; yet you talk in this lugubrious strain about presentiments. Do not give me cause to blush for your imbecility and vacillation, Godfrey."

Fenton yielded to his mother's influence, as he always did; and, with a sigh, said:

"You refuse then to read what Inez says? Her letter might touch you, for it deeply moved me."

"Give it to me!"

And Mrs. Markland held out her hand. With a sudden bound of hope, Fenton placed before her the lines Inez had so confidingly written; but, in place of reading them, his mother dropped the letter on the fire, and, as it flashed into a blaze, she decisively said:

"I will not read it, nor shall you do so again. What good could it do, when your destiny is positively settled? The first ardor of your fancy for that girl has passed away, and I will not permit you to sacrifice Opal to her. Leave to me the settlement of this difficulty. I will write to Miss Lopez at once and put an end to such delusions as she may cherish."

"I entreat that you will not do that, mother. If I *must* give Inez up, I will write to her myself and, as gently as I can, inform her of what is about to happen here. I could have been very happy with her I know, but I cannot estrange you forever from me, by disappointing you in the hope you have so long cherished. After all, Opal may, as you say, suit me best as a wife—she will not be apt to be jealous when I indulge my besetting sin of flirting with every pretty woman I meet."

Thus, coolly and selfishly, was a question settled which involved not only the happiness of two human beings, but which far more deeply concerned himself, if Fenton had only known it; but the dark curtain that conceals futurity allowed no glimpse of the risk he was incurring to penetrate its folds, unless his vague presentiments of evil were sent as a warning from the spirit-land.

Fenton did not much regard the destruction of the letter—the sight of Inez' writing no longer thrilled his soul with passionate joy as it once had done, and the scenes in which they had acted together seemed faded and dim beside the new excitement he had found in trying to win some proof of love from the shy and reserved Opal.

The one of whose affection he was assured sunk into insignificance beside the fair rival who, as yet, had given him no cause to believe that he had made himself master of her heart. The advantages of either marriage were so equally balanced that Fenton could afford to choose between them; and he decided to keep on good terms with his mother, and give the world in which he lived no opportunity to gossip about his ill-treatment of Miss Hastings.

Inez was far away—he could settle the whole difficulty without meeting her face to face, and very few near him would be aware that such an entanglement had ever existed. So the assurance Mrs. Markland so eagerly desired to gain was given, and he promised to write the truth to Inez at once.

But Fenton deferred this dreaded task from day to day—loth to strike the last blow to her trusting heart till it became absolutely necessary to do so.

The time in which Nina lay struggling back to life was passed by him in a state of painful uncertainty as to whether it would be best to write at all, or suffer Inez to infer his inconstancy from his silence.

A severe shock was given him by the arrival of another letter from her, in which she informed him that she was on the eve of setting out for Natchez, in compliance with the dying command of her father.

What was now to be done? Inez was already on her way; she might arrive any day, and after his first perturbation subsided, Fenton hurried to his mother, and advised with her as to what should be done. With indignant surprise, Mrs. Markland listened to what he had to tell, and exclaimed:

"I never heard of anything so indelicate in my life! The girl has actually followed you up, thinking that she would leave you no alternative but to marry her. If I had been before willing that she should become your wife, this step would have disgusted me to that degree that I should have withdrawn my consent. I shall certainly give her to understand what my opinion of such conduct is."

"You will have no occasion to come in contact with her at all, mother; and—and, I really do not think that you should judge Inez so harshly. She is but a young girl, quite ignorant of life, and her father's dying wish had all the sacredness of a command to her. I only wish that I could meet her as my heart prompts, and marry her as soon after she lands as possible. In spite of all that you say about honor, I feel that I am bound to her by that more than to Opal."

"Godfrey, it is enough to provoke a saint to witness the fluctuations of your feelings. Yesterday you were jealous of Guy Denham because he called at Silvermere and Opal changed color when he came in; and to-day you are ready to give her up to him and go back to your old love. It is shameful for any man to vacillate so. Your choice has been made, and you must abide by it."

The mention of Denham's name produced the effect Mrs. Markland had intended. Fenton disliked him, and he felt certain that in taking Opal from him he had repaid all the early heart-burnings that had arisen between them. In their boyish contests, Denham had nearly always come off conqueror; but in this one most vital to his happiness Fenton had proved the victor, and he would not resign that which he knew was so dearly prized, so ardently covetted, by his rival. So he moodily said:

"I am quite satisfied with my last choice, ma'am; but I have come to you to consult as to what is to be done with reference to Miss Lopez. I cannot see her; I dare not; but some one must meet her on her arrival in Natchez, and inform her of the state of affairs here."

"I will go myself, if that is all; and I think that I shall give this imprudent young lady some advice that will be useful to her."

Fenton shrank from this proposal. The blow would be severe enough, let it fall as lightly as it might; and his mother was the last one he would have been willing to allow the privilege of dealing it. He hastily replied:

"That would never do, mother. With my consent, you and Inez shall not meet at all. There is no need that you shall trouble yourself about her. Anna knows her very well, and they like each other. I will ask her to meet Inez, and take her to her house to explain to her there all that is necessary to be told."

"Very well; I am not anxious to take this awkward affair on myself if it can be avoided. Anna will do anything to serve you, though she cares very little for me. You may ask her to stand your friend, and Guy may console himself for the loss of Opal and her thousands by making love to your former divinity."

Fenton was now really angry, and, with flashing eyes, he said:

"She will never listen to him. False as I have proved myself, Inez will never give her hand to any other man."

"Then she is different from all other women," sneered his mother. "Don't play the part of the dog in the manger, Godfrey. You cannot marry both these girls, and if Guy can secure so great an heiress as you assert Miss Lopez to be, it will be a good thing for him."

"Perhaps it will, madam," replied Fenton, more calmly. "I will go over to Ashwood this morning and place my dilemma before Anna. She has been very cool to me of late, but I do not think she will refuse me this favor for the sake of Inez herself."

He rang the bell, ordered his horse to be brought around, and was soon speeding away on his errand.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

### Job Dodge—Or the Stormy Day.

It was a half-drizzling, half-stormy day in the middle of November—just such a day as puts nervous people in a bad humor with themselves and everybody else. Job Dodge sat brooding over the fire immediately after breakfast. His wife addressed him as follows:—"Job, can't you mend that front-door latch to-day?" "No," was the answer. "Well, can't you mend the handle of the water-pail?" "No." "Well, can't you fix a handle to the mop?" "No." "Well, can't you put up some pins for the clothes, in our chamber?" "No." "Well, can't you fix that north window, so that the rain and snow won't drive in?" "No—no—no!" answered the husband, sharply. He then took his hat, and was on the point of leaving the house, when his wife, knowing that he was going to the tavern, where he would meet some of his wet-day companions, asked him kindly to stop a moment. She then got her bonnet and cloak, and said to her husband, "You are going to the tavern; with your leave I will go with you." The husband stared. "Yes," said the wife, "I may as well go as you; if you go and waste the day, and tipple at the tavern, why shall not I do the same?" Job felt the reproof. He shut the door; hung up his hat; got the hammer and nails; did all his wife had requested, and sat down by his fire at night, a better and happier man.

### Greatness of Mind.

A Corsican, the leader of a gang of banditti, who had been famous for his exploits, was at length taken and committed to the care of a soldier, from whom he contrived to escape. The soldier was tried, and condemned to death. At the place of execution, a man, coming up to the commanding officer, said, "Sir, I am a stranger to you, but you shall soon know who I am; I have heard that one of your soldiers is to die for having suffered a prisoner to escape: he was not at all to blame; besides, the prisoner shall be restored to you. Behold him here—I am the man. I cannot bear that an innocent man should be punished for me, and I come to die myself." "No," cried the French officer, who felt as he ought the sublimity of the action, "thou shalt not die, and the soldier shall be set at liberty. Endeavor to reap the fruits of thy generosity: thou deservest to be henceforth an honest man."

—A wise man's kingdom is his own breast: or if he ever looks farther, it will only be to the judgment of a select few who are free from prejudices, and capable of giving him solid and substantial advice.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

## THE COMPOSITORS.

BY WILLIAM ROSE WALLACE.

No. XXVI.

Ho hos not seen the sky long while,
And yet it wears no olden smile:
He has not seen for many a day
The mountains' mighty towers,
And yet they've brightly paralleled
With emerald trees and flowers:

He has not heard great Ocean's voice
For many a year around him God,
With mystic epicurian lighting on
From sandy shore to mountain wall:

All Nature has been closed to him
As much as though a hand of fire
In wrath, sterling Iron Pain,
Had turned her to a grave!

And yet no wave of grief complaint
Comes from his wasted lips—
His beautiful, pure spirit wrestles
With runes his eclipse;

For Memory calls it up again,
Kindling in the Ocean mind,
And in the mountain's forested rocks,
The sky's broad light or thunder shocks:
But grander, sweeter yet the changes—
"Though Nature veils her real face,
Yet oh no fairer, glorious guise
Millions of my dear Race!"

## SCRAPS OF ADVENTURE.

### FROM AN OLD SAILOR'S LOG-BOOK.

No. XLVI.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

THE OLD FLAG.—A THRILLING INCIDENT.

"Ensign Bellz!" announced the orderly at the cabin-door.

And the messenger-boy came forward and struck them.

And then the shrill pipes of the boatswain and his mates came piercing through the air, to announce that dinner was ready.

But I did not hurry down; nor did Fleld Commings; for just then we saw a flying-fish coming into sight beyond Roman Point. Then came the fish; then the fore-staysail; then the heavier canvas of the foremast; then the lofty sails of the mainmast; then came the missen; aloud after aloud of the spanker came into sight; and presently, like a bright and beautiful spirit of heaven, floating out upon the gentle breeze, we beheld that glorious old flag, bearing upon its embalzoned field the type of Union and the emblem of Liberty. It was to us a cheering sight, and ere I knew that such emotions were stirring within me I found tears coursing down my cheeks.

Of my dwelling in this Land of Blessed Memories—its interiors of Freedom—little know ye of the glorious beauty of that Starry Flag, and little will ye be of its sweet power to move the hearts of those who love it, until it has burst upon your vision in some clime where your yearning soul hath been long and wearily turning its tireless scanning!

Fiddy and I waited until we had seen the American ship have her yards and change her helm for entering the Bay, and then we went below and got our breakfast. When we returned to the spar-deck we found that the ship was a-high anchor, and that her sea-boat was being drawn up by the clewlines and bunntins, although she did not intend to go there. She had signalized for the Health-officer, and I saw a boat putting off from the entry-port.

"Depend upon it, Beck, she isn't going to stop long," said Fiddy. "I'm afraid we shan't have a chance to send our letters."

I looked at, and saw Mr. McGregor upon the quarter-deck; so I went to the main fife-rail and touched my hat. The officer of the deck asked me what I wanted; but I did not have to tell him, for just then the first Lieutenant came and spoke to me.

"What is it, Burton?"

I told him that Fiddy and I wished to send letters home by the American ship. He inquired here, and dropped my eyes to the deck, and he knew very well what was upon my mind, for he said to me:

"You have at a time, my boy, and you'll be more likely to have it granted. Would you lose your prize-money for the sake of going away in that ship?"

I looked up, and told him that I had a mother, and a brother and sister, where that ship was going.

Mr. McGregor shook his head.

"It is no use," said he. "I don't know what I might be persuaded to do if I had authority; but I can tell you that Captain Tremeyan will not lose you on any account. Look ye: You know we have to be here some days on account of men. We have been recruiting for the ship, and we've got to fill up our complement before we go. If the ship is carried out that we first made, you will be sent on board another ship. How should you like that?"

The simple proposition was agonizing. I told the lieutenant I would rather stop on board Britain in irons than be sent on board another British ship.

"Well," said he, with a kindly smile, "I shall gain for you the privilege of both going and of your companion's remaining with me. And now, my boy, go and bring your letters to me as soon as the American ship obtains pratique! I will see to them myself."

I saw that he did not wish me to ask him anything more, so I turned away; and being called Fiddy, we went below, where we finished our letters. I had already written home before, and though they contained the only journal I had kept since I had been on board the ship, I let them go, trusting to my memory to make another. The master-at-arms let me have candle and some sealing-wax, and when all was ready I took the letters up to the lieutenant. Mr. McGregor came and put them:

"Did you write this in connection?" he asked, as he looked at the direction upon the letter.

I said that I did. He made no further remark, but I could see by his look that he thought the writing extremely good, and I was glad.

The American ship, in I suppose an hour, had come into Rose Bagnio, with a clean bill of health, so she received pratique at once; and as soon as she had dropped her anchor, Mr. McGregor had the second cutter called away, and sent Charles Treveylan with the letters. When he returned I sent him to the gangway and asked him what ship it was in which he was from.

He told me it was the "*Benjamin Franklin*," and that she belonged to Baltimore.

How glad I was! I had thought to myself—suppose she should be from Boston—Fiddy and had some one on board whom I knew; but, hailing from a port so far from my home, she seemed more like a stranger, and my burden of disappointment in not having been permitted to go on board was immeasurably lightened.

At four o'clock the "*Benjamin Franklin*" bore up her anchor and made sail, and just as she was disappearing from view beyond the western headland of the bay, Jack Miller came and sat down by my side.

"Beckut," said he, "I never told ye about that adventure I had in the Bay o' Tangier."

"No," said I; "and I'd like to hear it."

With a few flourishes, such as Jack always grew when about to spin a yarn, he commenced his story as follows.

"It's just seven years ago this last September—the year before the battle of Trafalgar—I was made fast to the swing-in-boom, and the heat is enough to fry the blessed devil in his own brimstone stew; and I'm sure that the devil himself couldn't have been more miserable than I was at that time. I was a-thinkin' of the cool, shady lanes of Old England, and of the cool, shady lanes of Ould Ireland, and of the cool, shady lanes of Scotland, too—for me dad hevvy guns shouted, and sometimes I'd get a bit of a breeze as old sand-stone fort and batter at the walls. We was lyin' here at Gibraltar when news come in that there was trouble with our consul in Tangier; so off we went with another frigate and two sloops-o'-war, to see what was the matter. After a while we found out 'at our consul was more to blame than the shore chaps had been, as he didn't have the sperit o' purpose in them old sand forts as we'd bottled 'em. Howsomever, we had to lay there a couple weeks or so to get at the right, and durin' that time we made ourselves as comfortable as we could, for it was a hot spell, and two or three times a week the captain used to let us take a duck overboard. We used to go in at four o'clock in the afternoon. I'm sure I can't tell how it started a man-o'-war for swimmin'?

I was forced to confess my ignorance, and Jack explained:

"Ye see, sometimes there may be danger o' sharks; and then agin, there may be danger of a man's harrin' his comrade, jumpin' off the ship and could wrastle; so we just rig out and slue the boat off the lower starb'rds. The fust o' the call is boun'd by a bit of tender spun-yarn, sir' then run up to his mark; and when the boatswain-mate broke the pipe, the little ball opened, and the boat was hauled alongside to the lower gangway. I'll tell ye, Beckut, it was done the dreadful. What can I do? The boat was comin' up swiftly, fairly flyin', and in a very short space of time I knowed she couldn't reach me afore the shark did. It was impossible as it would be for the fust yer messenger-boy to strike a bell late in town! Remembering, the fust wonderful sense that I found my strength all come back. Ye see, I hadn't been swimmin' in not since I'd first found Sam.'s cry; and the dreadful water had kind o' rested me. It's my notion, Beck, for awful danger to make me strong when the pluck comes; and I tell ye, I was strong then. I knowed it the shark' wor' a coward. The very way he makes his attack shows it—an' the thought struck me 'at I might hold him off by flightenin' him, till the boat reached me. Good grashus! there wasn't only one thing I could do. If I should strike out to swim, that would be me death, so if I held still an' let the cuss come up an' nab me as he pleased. So I just stood there in the water, makin' motion enough with my feet to keep me up, sir, at the same time, keepin' a sharp look-out down towards the p'int where the shark would be likely to turn.

"Beck, I tell ye 'at, durin' them few seconds, I thought of where my dead mother was, an' I

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"Sir—more than that. I shuddered as I thought of it, and acknowledged to him that it was all true, and that I was married and a mother dreadful.

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We had now been at Gibraltar eight days. Our prizes had been turned over to government, and the Admiralty Court had condemned them. We had returned to our ship; and all was ready for the sailing of the convoy, as the prizes were put on board other vessels. Most of them were bound up to Lisbon, and a large number of the under-sailing orders for some station outside.

Fiddy and I were very much disappointed, but they didn't find many, after all, to send away. The fact was that the ship was full, and the few we rounded ten had since died, leaving only two or three vacancies. Of course, we understood the limited was a hundred and eighty men, including all officers and non-commissioned; and the Captain Tremeyan expected to send on board the American ship about twenty men, and that would be the number. And so I could not get off my malpractice from Billy Bull—the British tar's privilege to obtain a good discharge by assuming the responsibility of retaining them. Fiddy was in the same fix. Time ran on. After it was all over I saw the captain and Mr. McGregor laughing, and I heard enough to understand that they were making merry over the discomfiture of the captain of the fine-schedule ship, who had expected to get thirty of our men at least.

That evening Mr. McGregor called me to him on the quarter-deck.

"Beckut," said he, "we have permission from the admiral to grant liberty to three of our men whom we can trust. Have you thought that you would like to go on shore?"

"Sir, sir," I replied; and I spoke earnestly, for my desire was strong to view the wonderful fortifications of the place.

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"Well, you'd'nt was rigged out once arter that," said Jack, in conclusion, "but there was almost ninety minutes more to the duty there'd been two sharks seen hangin' around the ship, and I was a-thinkin' that one of 'em might be bold an' mercenous enough to attack the stranger in distress."

We had now been at Gibraltar eight days. Our prizes had been turned over to government, and the Admiralty Court had condemned them. We had returned to our ship; and all was ready for the sailing of the convoy, as the prizes were put on board other vessels. Most of them were bound up to Lisbon, and a large number of the under-sailing orders for some station outside.

Fiddy and I were very much disappointed, but they didn't find many, after all, to send away. The fact was that the ship was full, and the few we rounded ten had since died, leaving only two or three vacancies. Of course, we understood the limited was a hundred and eighty men, including all officers and non-commissioned; and the Captain Tremeyan expected to send on board the American ship about twenty men, and that would be the number. And so I could not get off my malpractice from Billy Bull—the British tar's privilege to obtain a good discharge by assuming the responsibility of retaining them. Fiddy was in the same fix. Time ran on. After it was all over I saw the captain and Mr. McGregor laughing, and I heard enough to understand that they were making merry over the discomfiture of the captain of the fine-schedule ship, who had expected to get thirty of our men at least.

That evening Mr. McGregor called me to him on the quarter-deck.

"Beckut," said he, "we have permission from the admiral to grant liberty to three of our men whom we can trust. Have you thought that you would like to go on shore?"

IMMORTALITY.—Here is a new style of writing, and it is a very good one. Let every young person that now to a virtuous and industrious young lady but unfortunately for my happiness, I soon discovered that there was a total dissimilarity in our tastes and opinions. I am extremely fond of reading, and frequently devote my leisure hour by reading aloud, from the charming works of Scott, Dickens, Irving, Prescott, and others, which she would sit by my side and listen for fifteen or six at all; and, in fact, I can never interest her in reading anything but the details of the last horse-race, or the gossip of the last assembly of dance that I frequently have a scene of isolation and loneliness that is almost unbearable. Thanks to my Puritan education, the memory of my mother, and a sense of honor, I have resolved to fulfill my part of entering into the holy state of wedlock. Among my acquaintances I have a young lady whose mind and disposition is of a most exalted nature with my own; and we have formed quite an intimate friendship; and I am sorry to acknowledge that I have more pleasure in her society than in that of my wife. Now, the points upon which I wish to get your opinions are these: To what extent should I indulge myself in this lady's society? Ought I to refrain from her company entirely, or, in the strictness of my intimacy, what reason can I give that would not be insulting to her?" You are a cunning hypocrite. Had you never made the acquaintance of this "congenial young lady" it is not probable that you would write "pleasure in her society" and "exalted in" "amiableness" type. Read your books to yourself and to your wife, and you will find that you will be more than "congenial" young lady, let her go. You dont see the fun of your position as long as there is a chance to yourself like a decent husband.

A SOLID-HEARTED WIFE says: "I have two children, and am a member of an evangelical church and a regular attendant upon its services. I am in good circumstances, and my husband, an industrious laborer, is a member of a different denomination, but of no church. He will not take me to my meeting, or pay anything on my pew-rent, and says that he will not. Ought I to give me some advice? I dare not forsake my God, or neglect the duties of my church, and yet I am sure my husband is not pleased with my going. Shall I remain at home with my children, or go to church, with a thanksgiving heart?" Your husband is a fool, and would be rewarding the sermon on the Mount, in a grateful manner. You are a sensible, trembling lady, and you need to God for illumination and guidance. By doing your duty to your family, you will be doing your duty to your God, and your husband will be pleased. Indeed he ought to see that your first and highest duty is to your children, and that your duty to your God is. If you truly persecuted by the spirit of real Christianity you will be constantly striving to improve, in all of your condition, thyself all things to your before, and your husband will be the first to see and appreciate seeing your good works, would be lead also to glorify your God.

Remember, that a good example is more powerful in these everybody, you should refuse to some Jesus. Remember, that a good example is more powerful in these everybody, you should refuse to some Jesus. The kinds of words are not more virtuous than the kinds of words are not more virtuous than the kinds of words are not more virtuous than the